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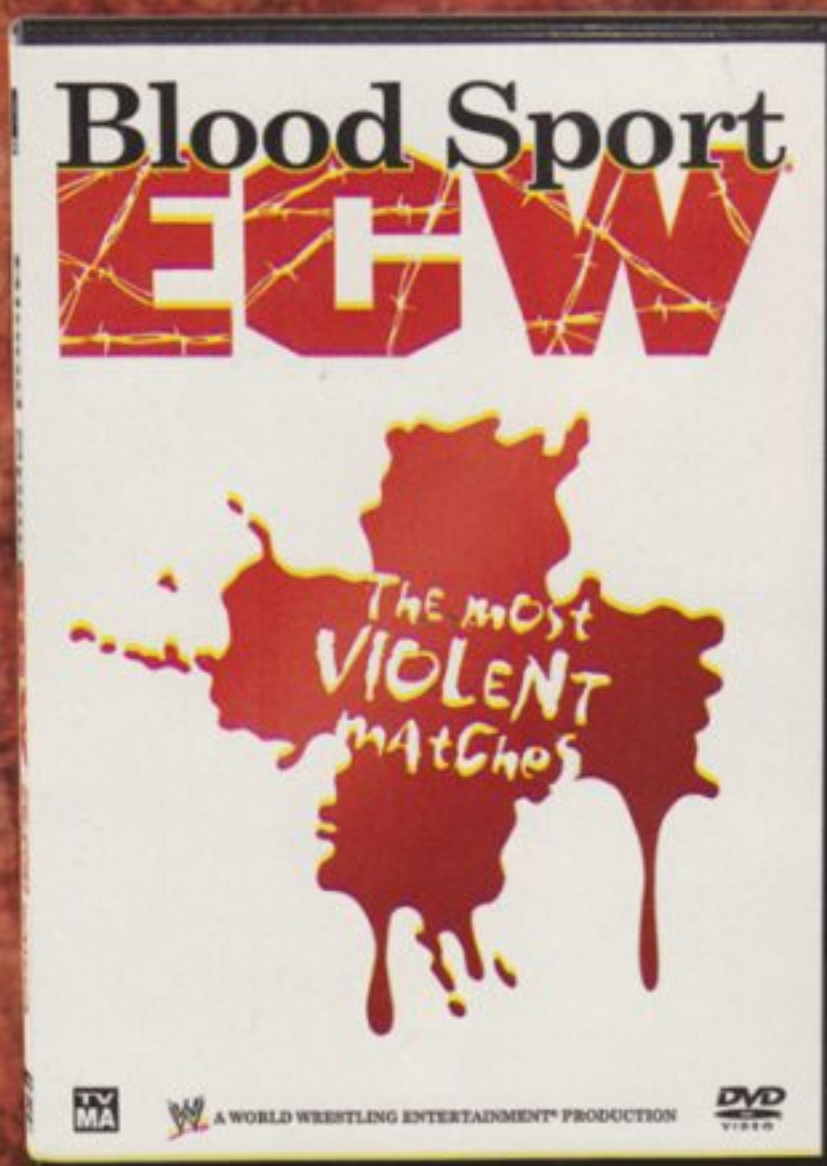

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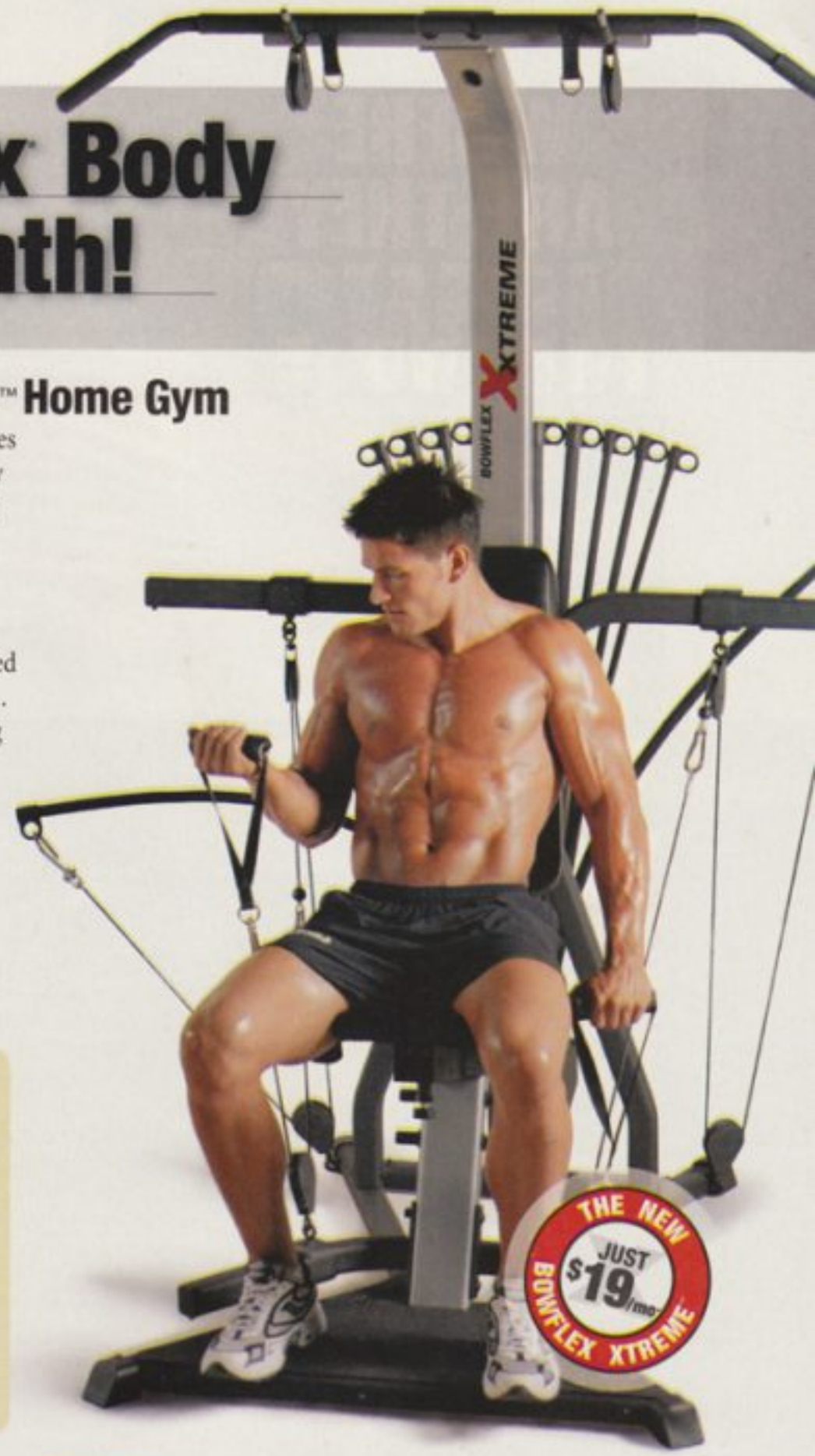

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

TUGBOAT

When people recognize Fred Ottman, they periodically want to talk about his days as Tugboat, Hulk Hogan's buddy on WWE broadcasts. Or, they may discuss his 1992 WWE World Tag Team title reign as Typhoon, with partner John "Earthquake" Tenta. But when their lips curl up in a smile, Fred prepares himself for the next question. Almost always, it involves one of the most embarrassing moments ever seen on a wrestling program.

In 1993, the towering gladiator was brought to WCW as the Shockmaster. There was supposed to be an element of mystery to this new personality, so he wore a hard rubber mask speckled with glitter.

"The eye slots were maybe one-eighteenth of an inch," he says, "and glitter was coming through the holes, going into my eyes. I broke through a wall, but I had the mask and this cape on and couldn't see. I didn't realize that when I busted through, the hole only went as far down as my knees. So when I went to step forward, I tripped and fell.

"I was mad, upset, embarrassed, but it was live TV. It couldn't be erased. After a while, I learned to laugh about it."

Ottman's still laughing—about the incident and his time in wrestling.

"I had a great time," he says. "I traveled all over the world and met a lot of excellent people. When my kids watch WWE, they want me to make a comeback. But I'm too busy with them and with my job."

He is currently the safety director for an industrial hydroblast company in Florida. But sports-entertainment is never far from his mind. How could it be? His wife is Dusty Rhodes' sister-in-law.

"Yeah, Dusty and I are married to sisters," he says. "My kids (Berkley, 13, Bailey, 11, and Beau, 9) call Dusty their uncle. It's part of the reason why I love wrestling. If it wasn't for wrestling, I wouldn't have met Dusty, and I wouldn't have my kids."

Weighing in at close to 400 pounds, Tugboat first appeared in WWE in 1990, sporting sailor stripes and a nautical hat, and palling around with Hulk Hogan.

"Kids were drawn to me," he says, "which I liked because I'm a big kid myself. I still watch cartoons. Hulk Hogan was one of the most popular guys in the world then, and people identified me with him. As you can guess, that was excellent for my career."

As Typhoon, the combatant was more of a serious brute, teaming with Earthquake, a Canadian-born former sumo wrestler. "He was such a great guy," Ottman says, "good-hearted and an amazing athlete. I learned so much from him. We were huge and could brutalize people. Whatever grape we wanted from the tree was ours."

Although his stay in WCW was less than extraordinary, Ottman maintained his connection with the fans. In 2001, he participated in the "Gimmick Battle Royal" at *WrestleMania X-7* in Houston as Tugboat.

"Most of all, I appreciated the fans," he says. "They made my day when I was on the road. I met so many people from so many walks of life. I used to be reclusive when I was a kid. Being in WWE changed my personality for the better."

— Keith Elliot Greenberg

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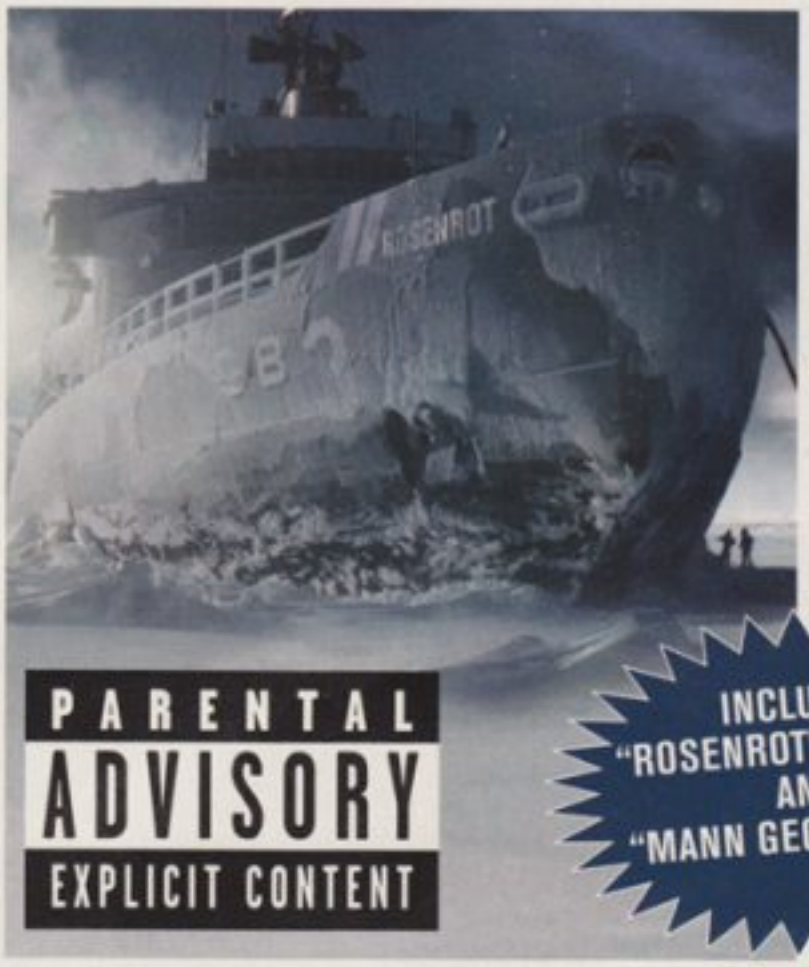

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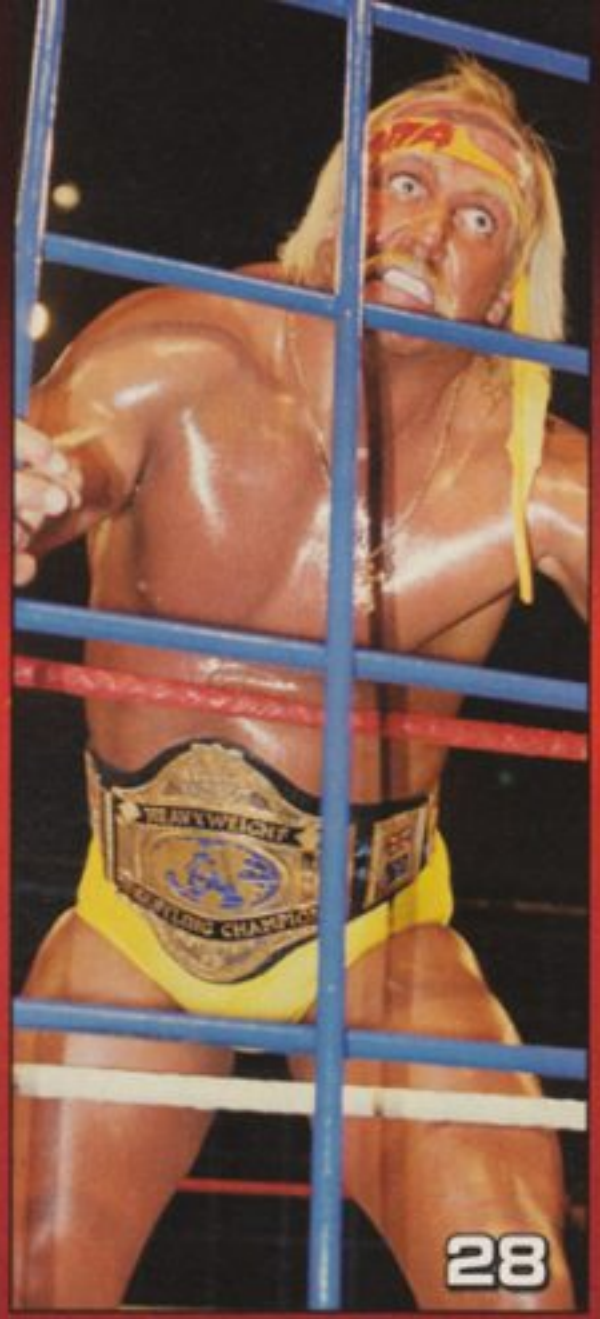
RAW MAGAZINE MARCH 2006



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20 Spectacular

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34 The Time is Now

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42 Hometown Hottie

As the clock ticks down to *WrestleMania 22*, Maria comes home to show fans just why Chicago is the place to be!

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Letters to the editor

Send us your comments, critiques, artwork and photos to:
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RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE

Dear Editor,
I really liked the "Can You Feel The *Rumble*" article in the January 2006 issue of *Raw Magazine*. I've always enjoyed watching the *Royal Rumble* pay-per-views, because it was always interesting to see the two possible World Champs that the *Rumble* winner may face. But my favorite *Royal Rumble* match had to be when Ric Flair won the WWE Championship in 1993. Thanks for the articles, and thanks for the *Rumble* memories.

Eric Darsie
East Bethel, MN

Dear Editor,
The *Royal Rumble* is always my favorite way to start the year! Thank you for your excellent coverage in your January issue. Coincidentally, the *Royal Rumble* falls on my birthday this year, and I can't think of a better gift than watching 30 of my favorite Superstars battle it out! Thanks and keep up the good work!

J. Norton
Via e-mail

Dear Editor,
I always look forward to the January issue of *Raw Magazine*, because usually there's an interesting article about the *Royal Rumble*, and this year is no different. I truly enjoyed reading "Can You Feel The *Rumble*?" in the January 2006 issue. It's extremely hard to predict the winner of the over-the-top bout. You have so many guys in the ring that wrestle different styles. It's always interesting to see the underdogs topple the giants. The *Royal Rumble* is all about survival, and the one who plays their cards right is usually the winner.

Jesse Richardson
Highland, MI

LADIES IN LACE

Dear Editor,
Whoa! The Divas Lingerie preview ("Satin Dolls," January) was AMAZING! WWE definitely has the hottest women around, and this pictorial was the proof. Please, please, please keep features like this coming in your magazine!

Paul Morrison
Painted Post, NY

Dear Editor,
I can't thank you enough for the *hot* pictures of the WWE Divas in January's issue. Once I saw "Divas Lingerie Preview" on the cover, that's right where I went. So thanks and keep the good pics coming!

Brennan Epperson
Via E-mail

CENA STILL 'THE CHAMP'

Dear Editor,
I would like to start by saying thank you so much for another great cover story on John Cena ("Never Back Down," Holiday *Raw*). I believe that Cena is a great champion. He's taught his fans to "Never Back Down" no matter what. He's never backed down before and we all know that he never will! I would also like to say thank you very much for another great poster of him. The champ is here to stay; he's not going anywhere! He's honestly the sexiest WWE Champion ever in my eyes! Cena, if you're reading this, keep up the good work. I'm still in your corner.

Julia Brewster
Bakersfield, CA

ST. MICK

Dear Editor,
Thanks so much for your article on Mick Foley ("Foley Is Back," January). I've been wondering when the Hardcore Legend was going to return to the ring. Thankfully, we all got our wish at *Taboo Tuesday*, and I can only hope that it won't be long before Foley graces us with his presence again!

Tucker Ray
Possum Trot, MS

READERS GET *RAW!*

Artwork by Marc Auger
Québec City, Québec, Canada

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HOGAN Knows Best Premieres March 19 at 10/9c. Only on VH1.			1	2	3	4 Chattanooga, TN 7:30 p.m.
5 Knoxville, TN 5:00 PM	6 Birmingham, AL *Raw* 6:45 p.m. VAL VENIS' BIRTHDAY	7	8	9	10	11 Waco, TX 7:30 p.m.
12 Tyler, TX 5:00 p.m.	13 Beaumont, TX *Raw* 6:45 p.m.	14	15	16	17	18 Detroit, MI *Saturday Night's Main Event* 7:30 p.m.
19 Jackson, MS 5:00 p.m. *Hogan Knows Best* Premieres at 10/9c. Only on VH1.	20 Memphis, TN *SuperShow* 5:45 p.m.	21	22	23	24 Rochester, MN 7:30 p.m.	25 Spencer, IA 7:30 p.m.
26 Sioux Falls, SD 5:00 p.m.	27 Omaha, NE *Raw* 6:45 p.m.	28	29	30	31	

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY:

3/1/1987: WWE legend Bruno Sammartino is inducted into the Italian-American Sports Hall of Fame in Pittsburgh, PA.

3/11/1993: Former WWE Superstar Dino Bravo is found murdered in his Laval, Quebec home.

3/15/1946: El Santo defeats Pete Pancoff to win the NWA World Welterweight title in Mexico City. He would go on to become one of the biggest stars in all of *lucha libre*.

3/16/2002: Disabled phenom Zack Gowen makes his professional wrestling debut.

3/20/1985: At age 46, WWE legend Big John Studd dies of liver cancer in Burke, Virginia.

3/24/1960: Barry Horowitz is born in St. Petersburg, Florida. He would go on to become one of WWE fans' favorite journeymen wrestlers.

3/24/1991: Jake "The Snake" Roberts and Rick "The Model" Martel steal the show at *WrestleMania VII* with a thrilling Blindfold Match. It would come to be known as one of the best specialty matches of all time.

3/27/1988: "Macho Man" Randy Savage defeats Ted DiBiase to win the WWE Championship at *WrestleMania IV*.

3/28/2000: Stephanie McMahon wins her first WWE Women's Championship by defeating Jacqueline in San Antonio, Texas.

3/29/1987: A record 93,173 fans attend one of the biggest events in WWE history, *WrestleMania III*. The event featured memorable appearances by Aretha Franklin and Alice Cooper, along with a classic match between "Macho Man" Randy Savage and Ricky Steamboat, as well as the epic encounter between Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant.

3/29/1998: The "Attitude" era officially begins when Stone Cold Steve Austin defeats Shawn Michaels to win the WWE Championship at *WrestleMania XIV*.

3/31/1985: *WrestleMania* begins. The world of sports-entertainment changes forever.

'MACHO MADNESS' REIGNS SUPREME

MARCH 27, 1988

After three groundbreaking years of *WrestleMania*, the extravaganza would descend upon Atlantic City, New Jersey on March 27,1988. Shortly beforehand, the WWE Championship had been declared vacant, giving way to a time of great uncertainty for WWE following Hulk Hogan's reign of over four years. A tournament featuring some of the greatest WWE Superstars of all time was to be held to crown the new champion. The tournament certainly did not go as a planned. In the most anticipated match of the night, Hulk Hogan and Andre the Giant faced off in the quarterfinals. But the rematch of the main event of *WrestleMania III* would not end with a clear victor, but with a controversial double-disqualification. This gave the underhanded "Million-Dollar Man" Ted DiBiase a bye into the finals. On the other hand, "Macho Man" Randy Savage battled and defeated Butch Reed, Greg "The Hammer" Valentine and the One Man Gang to get to the finals. DiBiase used every dirty tactic he could, but even the interference of Andre the Giant couldn't kill the fighting spirit of "Macho Madness" and the loyal friendship of Hulk Hogan. With Hogan's aid, Savage scored the pinfall and won his first WWE Championship. It was the first time the title would change hands at *WrestleMania*.

WELCOME TO *WRESTLEMANIA!*

MARCH 31, 1985

It is hard to imagine a time without the yearly tradition of *WrestleMania*. The event that started it all represented a different kind of sports-entertainment than that of older generations. At *WrestleMania*, pop idols and movie actors battled against and alongside WWE Superstars. Not only did Andre the Giant face off against Big John Studd in a $15,000 Bodyslam Challenge, but Liberace was there to delight the fans as he danced with the Radio City Rockettes. Alongside Liberace, celebrity appearances were made by Muhammad Ali, Billy Martin and Cyndi Lauper. In the main event, Hulk Hogan and Mr. T defeated "Rowdy" Roddy Piper and "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff to end what was arguably the most important evening in WWE history. In one night at Madison Square Garden, the old world of traditional wrestling was transformed into the modern phenomenon of sports-entertainment.

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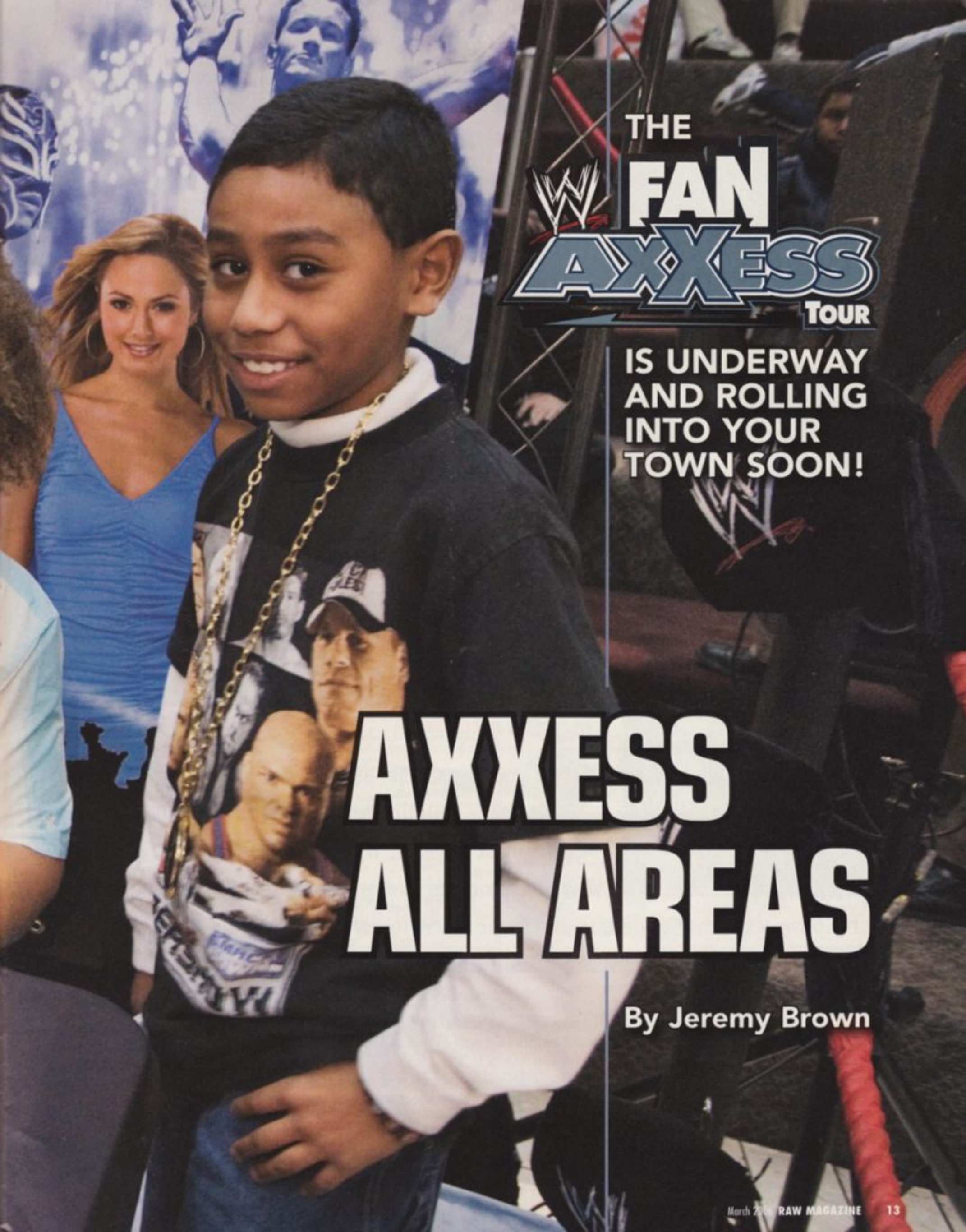

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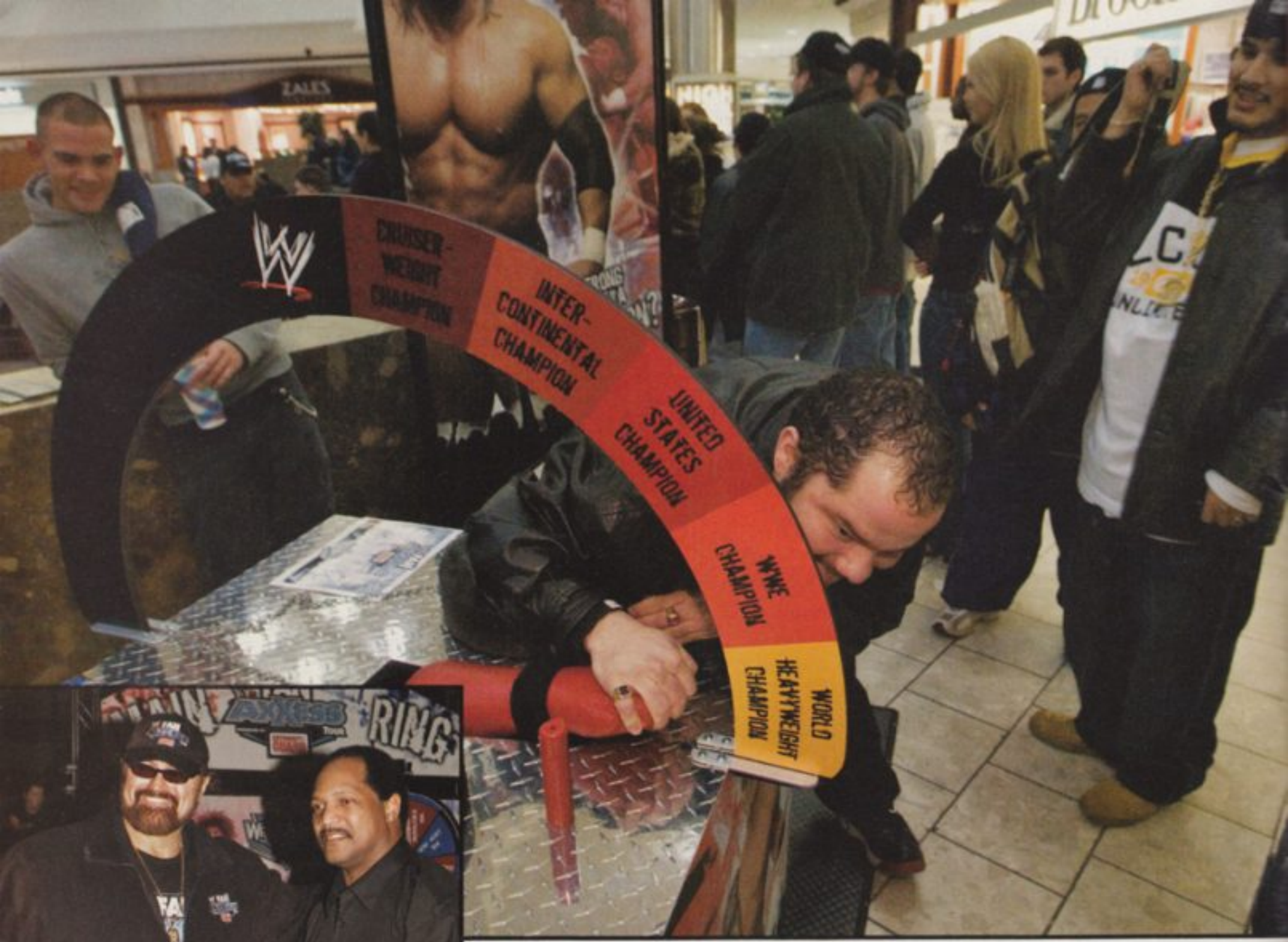
By Jeremy Brown



STANDING INSIDE THE STAMFORD (CONN.) TOWN CENTER small, Hillbilly Jim seemed to glow. It was the first night of WWE's *Fan Axxess Tour*, and the fans had turned up in droves to gaze at WWE memorabilia, rub elbows with the Superstars and immerse themselves in the world of WWE. From any standpoint, the event was a resounding success.

"I'm so doggone delighted to again be a part of this *Fan Axxess Tour*," Hillbilly Jim said in between shaking hands and snapping pictures. "This is the third year in a row that I've done this, and it's actually gotten bigger and better every year."

How right he is. Now into its third year, the *Fan Axxess Tour* has quickly become a staple of WWE's Road to *WrestleMania*. A heady mix of new-school technology and old-school nostalgia, *Fan Axxess* is a chance for WWE fans to get up close and personal with WWE and the people they watch on *Raw* and *SmackDown* every week.

"This particular tour is going to be so much more interactive with the fans and they can open up their eyes to what's going on in WWE," Hillbilly Jim said.

The scene inside Stamford Town Center was electric as fans measured their hands against Big Show's, watched classic WWE moments (as well as the brand-new trailer for Kane's

(continued on pg. 18)

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Deluxe Replica (WWEDB25) $399.00
Kid-Size (WWEBK25) $149.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI25) $60.00

Championship Belt — Version 2

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB12) $239.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB12) $399.00
Ultra-Deluxe Replica (WWEUDB12) $499.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEKB12) $109.00

Nameplates Available: Triple H, Chris Jericho, Undertaker, The Rock, Kurt Angle, JBL, Eddie Guerrero, John Cena, Blank

United States Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Blank · John Cena, Kurt Angle, Chris Benoit

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB19) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB19) $369.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK19) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI19) $30.00

Intercontinental Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Blank · Randy Orton, Rob Van Dam · Kane, Chris Jericho · Shawn Michaels

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB18) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB18) $369.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK18) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI18) $30.00

$$ Million Dollar Belt $$

Adult-Size Belt Replica $399.00 (WWEDB33)

Undisputed Championship Belt — Version 1

Nameplates Available: Blank, Triple H · Chris Jericho, Undertaker · The Rock, Kurt Angle

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB9) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB9) $369.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI9) $30.00

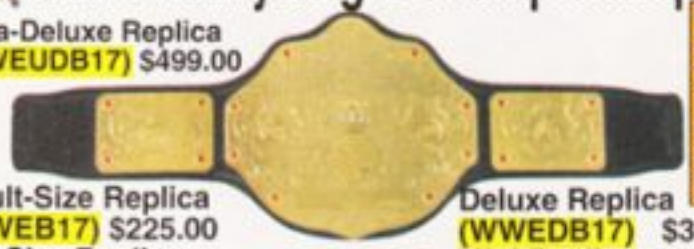
Personalized Replica Belt Nameplates

ROBERT JOHNSON

Adult Size or Deluxe Size (ENGRAVEADULT1) $25.00 each
Kid Size (ENGRAVEKID1) $15.00 each

For all Adult Size, Deluxe Size and Kid Size & Replica Belts that have nameplates. Please specify the style and size belt the nameplate is for.

World Heavyweight Championship Belt



Ultra-Deluxe Replica (WWEUDB17) $499.00

Nameplates Available: Blank, Chris Benoit, Shawn Michaels, Triple H, Kane, The Rock, Ric Flair, Randy Orton, Batista

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB17) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB17) $399.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK17) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI17) $30.00

World Tag Team Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Blank · William Regal · Chris Jericho · Christian, The Hurricane · Booker T

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB16) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB16) $369.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK16) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI16) $30.00

Tag Team Championship Belt

Nameplates Available: Blank · Edge, Kurt Angle · Chris Benoit · Eddie Guerrero, John Cena · Rey Mysterio

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB13) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB13) $369.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK13) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI13) $30.00

Winged Eagle World Champion

Adult-Size Replica with: black strap (WWEB30) blue strap (WWEB30B) $249.00 each
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB30) $399.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK30) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI30) $30.00
Mini Replica (blue strap) (WWEMINI30B) $30.00

Intercontinental Belt

Adult-Size Replica with: black strap (WWEB31) white strap (WWEB31W) Yellow strap (WWEB31Y) Blue strap (WWEB31B) $249.00 each
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB31) $399.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK31) $109.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI31) $30.00
Mini Replica (blue strap) (WWEMINI31B) $30.00
Mini Replica (yellow strap) (WWEMINI31Y) $30.00

1986 World Championship Belt

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB32) $249.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB32) $369.00
Mini Replica (WWEMINI32) $30.00

1985-1998 World Tag Team Belt

Adult-Size Belt Replica $299.00 (WWEB33)

Attitude Edition World Champion

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB20) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB20) $349.00
Kid-Size Replica (WWEBK20) $109.00

Smokin' Skull Champion

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB15) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB15) $349.00

Attitude Edition European Champion

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB23) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB23) $349.00

Attitude Edition World Tag Team Champion

Adult-Size Replica (WWEB22) $225.00
Deluxe Replica (WWEDB22) $349.00

ECW Heavyweight Champion

Adult-Size Replica (ECWB1) $199.00
Deluxe Replica (ECWDB1) $349.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWBK1) $109.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWMINI1) $30.00

ECW Television Champion

Adult-Size Replica (ECWB2) $199.00
Deluxe Replica (ECWDB2) $349.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWBK2) $109.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWMINI2) $30.00

ECW Tag Team Champion

Adult-Size Replica (ECWB3) $199.00
Deluxe Replica (ECWDB3) $349.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWBK3) $109.00
Kid-Size Replica (ECWMINI3) $30.00

Cruiserweight /United States /Tag Team/ Heavyweight /TV Championship Belts

Nameplates available: (World Heavyweight Champion only) The Rock · Chris Jericho · Booker T · Ric Flair, Shawn Michaels · Kurt Angle · Triple H · Blank

Deluxe Replica $349.00
Cruiserweight (WCWDB4)
United States (WCWDB3)
Tag Team (WCWDB2)
World Heavyweight (WCWDB1)
World Television (WCWDB5)

Adult-Size Replica $199.00
Cruiserweight (WCWB4)
United States (WCWB3)
Tag Team (WCWB2)
World Heavyweight (WCWB1)
World Television (WCWB5)
Hardcore (WCWB9)

Kid-Size Replica $109.00
Cruiserweight (WCWBK4)
World Heavyweight (WCWBK1)
World Television (WCWBK5)

Mini-Replica $30.00
Cruiserweight (WCWMINI4)
United States (WCWMINI3)
Tag Team (WCWMINI2)
World Heavyweight (WCWMINI1)

World Heavyweight Ultra Deluxe (WCWUDB1) $499.00

Classic Heavyweight Championship 1991-93 Era Belt

Adult-Size Replica (WCWB8) $249.00

Adult-Size & Kid-Size Championship Replica Belts
Adult-size and kid-size exact-scale replicas are made of simulated leather. Each medallion is made of metal and is 2mm thick. The adult-size replica fits up to a 46-inch waist and the kid-size replica fits up to a 34-inch waist.

Mini-Championship Replica Belts
The mini-replica belts are made from the same material as the full-size replica belts. Mini-replicas are 12 inches long, and can be used as a wristband or for desktop display.

Deluxe Championship Replica Belts
All deluxe belts are full-size. Straps are made of genuine leather. All medallions are made of metal that is 2mm thick. Each deluxe belt fits up to a 46-inch waist.

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Series 1 — Rey Mysterio™ Replica Masks $99.00 each

These are exact-scale replicas molded from Rey Mysterio's actual mask.

Black	(WWEREPLICAMASK03)
Silver	(WWEREPLICAMASK04)
Red	(WWEREPLICAMASK05)
White	(WWEREPLICAMASK06)
Yellow	(WWEREPLICAMASK07)

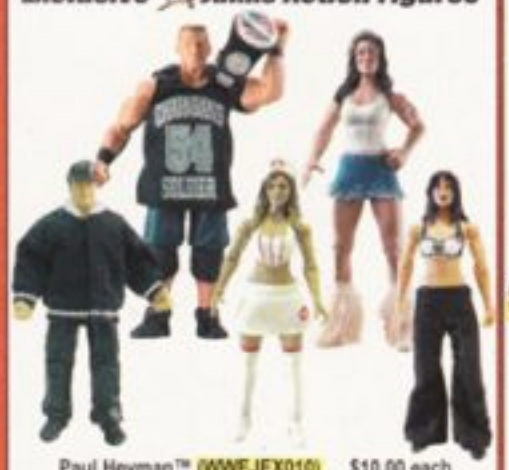
Series 2

Gold	(WWEREPLICAMASK09)
Camoflauge	(WWEREPLICAMASK10)
Red & White	(WWEREPLICAMASK11)
Red & Green	(WWEREPLICAMASK12)

Rey Mysterio™ WrestleMania® 21 Replica Mask

WrestleMania® 21 Replica Mask (WWEREPLICAMASK15)

Exclusive Jakks Action Figures



Paul Heyman™ (WWEJEX010)	$10.00 each
Victoria™ (WWEJEX014)	$10.00 each
Dawn Marie™ (WWEJEX016)	$15.00 each
John Cena (WWEJEX018)	$16.00 each
Melina (WWEJEX019)	$15.00 each

Exclusive $9.00 each — Wrestlingsuperstore.com Jakks Action Figure Belts

Spinning Championship Belt WWEJMB06

United States Spinning Belt WWEJMB05

RAW® World Tag Team Championship Belt WWEJMB04

Intercontinental Belt WWEJMB03

Undisputed Heavyweight Belt WWEJMB02

World Heavyweight Belt WWEJMB01

Set of any 6 belts WWEJMB07 $15.00 set

Set of any 12 belts WWEJMB08 $25.00 set

Jakks Toy Belts $18.00 each

- Undisputed Championship Belt (WWEBELT01)
- Cruiserweight Championship Belt (WWEBELT02)
- The Rock's Brahma Bull Belt (WWEBELT07)
- European Championship Belt (WWEBELT11)
- Intercontinental Championship Belt (WWEBELT09)
- Light-Heavyweight Championship Belt (WWEBELT12)
- World Heavyweight Championship Belt (WWEBELT20)
- Stone Cold Smokin' Skull Belt (WWEBELT05)
- United States Championship Belt (WWEBELT21)
- *SmackDown!®* Tag Team Championship Belt (WWEBELT22)
- Classic Winged Eagle Championship Belt (WWEJAKKSBELT23)
- Classic Intercontinental Championship Belt (WWEJAKKSBELT24)
- Classic Tag Team Championship Belt (WWEBELT10)

8x10 Autographed Photos $20.00 each

Batista (WWEAUTO45)	Lilian Garcia (WWEAUTO38)
Torrie Wilson (WWEAUTO40)	Lita (WWEAUTO27)
Stacy Keibler (black dress) (WWEAUTO36)	Randy Orton (WWEAUTO24)
Stacy Keibler (blue skirt) (WWEAUTO35)	Rob Van Dam (WWEAUTO12)
Chris Jericho (WWEAUTO41)	Victoria (WWEAUTO29)
Christy Hemme (WWEAUTO33)	Kurt Angle (WWEAUTO43)
Paul London (WWEAUTO42)	Shawn Michaels (WWEAUTO23)
John Cena (WWEAUTO39)	Shelton Benjamin (WWEAUTO37)
Rey Mysterio (WWEAUTO20)	Matt Hardy (WWEAUTO25)
Ashley (WWEAUTO46)	Melina (WWEAUTO49)
Michelle McCool (WWEAUTO48)	Candice Michelle (WWEAUTO51)

We have the largest Jakks selection dating back to 1996

For East Bound 3-Pack
Sakoda, Funaki, Akio (WWEJEX011) $15.00 set

The Great American Bash® PPV Series 6
Torrie Wilson (WWEJ00450) $5.00 each

SummerSlam® PPV Series 7
Edge (WWEJ00322) $15.00 each
Undertaker (WWEJ00325) $15.00 each
JBL (WWEJ00234) $15.00 each
Trish Stratus (WWEJ00325) $15.00 each

Classic Superstars Collectors Series 1
Andre the Giant (WWEJ00002) $15.00 each

Classic Superstars Collectors Series 2
Ted Dibiase (WWEJ00018) $15.00 each
Jake "The Snake" Roberts (WWEJ00020) $15.00 each

Classic Superstars Series 5
King Kong Bundy (WWEJ00035) $15.00 each
Terry Funk (WWEJ00036) $15.00 each
Brutus Beefcake (WWEJ00037) $15.00 each
Nikolai Volkoff (WWEJ00038) $15.00 each
Iron Sheik (WWEJ00039) $15.00 each
Paul Orndorff (WWEJ00040) $15.00 each
Complete Set of 6 (WWEJ00041) $75.00 set

Classic Superstars Series 6
Shawn Michaels (WWEJ00060) $15.00 each
Doink The Clown (WWEJ00062) $15.00 each
Bobby Heenan (WWEJ00063) $15.00 each
Earthquake (WWEJ00064) $15.00 each

Best of ECW/WCW
Steven Richards (WWEJ00280) $15.00 each
Rhyno (WWEJ00281) $15.00 each
Billy Kidman (WWEJ00283) $15.00 each
Bubba Ray Dudley (WWEJ00284) $15.00 each
D-Von Dudley (WWEJ00285) $15.00 each
Chris Jericho (WWEJ00286) $15.00 each
Rey Mysterio (WCW) (WWEJ00287) $5.00 each
Chris Benoit (WWEJ00288) $15.00 each
Ric Flair (WWEJ00290) $15.00 each
Rey Mysterio (ECW) (WWEJ00291) $5.00 each

Classic Superstars Series 7
British Bulldog (WWEJ00500) $15.00 each
Andre The Giant (WWEJ00502) $15.00 each
Superstar Billy Graham (WWEJ00503) $15.00 each
Don Muraco (WWEJ00506) $15.00 each
Ultimate Warrior (WWEJ00507) $15.00 each
Gorilla Monsoon (WWEJ00508) $15.00 each

Classic Superstars Series 8
Hulk Hogan (WrestleMania) (WWEJ00510) $15.00 each
Bob Orton Jr. (WWEJ00513) $15.00 each
Freddie Blassie (WWEJ00514) $15.00 each
Jerry Lawler (WWEJ00515) $15.00 each
Brhster Brody (WWEJ00516) $15.00 each
Chief Jay Strongbow (WWEJ00517) $15.00 each

Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 10
Trish Stratus & Christian (WWEJ00399) $20.00 each
The Bashams (WWEJ00400) $20.00 each

Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 11
Billy Kidman vs Paul London (WWEJ00402) $20.00 each
John Cena vs Funaki (WWEJ00403) $20.00 each
Paul Heyman & Heidenreich (WWEJ00404) $20.00 each
Complete Set of 3 (WWEJ00405) $50.00 set

Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 12
JBL & Orlando Jordan (WWEJ00410) $20.00 each
Triple H & Batista (WWEJ00404) $20.00 each

Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 13
Luther Reigns & Kurt Angle (WWEJ00414) $20.00 set
Sylvain Grenier & Rob Conway (WWEJ00415) $20.00 set
Theodore Long & Rey Mysterio (WWEJ00416) $20.00 set
Complete Set of 3 (WWEJ00417) $60.00 set

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 13
Kurt Angle (WWEJ00170) $15.00 each
William Regal (WWEJ00171) $15.00 each
Rosey (WWEJ00173) $15.00 each
Shelton Benjamin (WWEJ00174) $15.00 each
Chavo Guerrero (WWEJ00175) $15.00 each

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 14
Trish Stratus (WWEJ00183) $15.00 each
Undertaker (WWEJ00185) $15.00 each
Triple H (WWEJ00182) $15.00 each
Shelton Benjamin (WWEJ00184) $15.00 each
Ric Flair (WWEJ00180) $15.00 each

Real Scale Ring $65.00 each (WWEJ5200)

Rings
Stunt Action Ring (WWEJ5100) $20.00 each

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 11
Batista (WWEJ00138) $15.00 each
Eugene (WWEJ00140) $5.00 each

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 15
Big Show (WWEJ00190) $15.00 each
Mark Jindrak (WWEJ00192) $15.00 each
Snitsky (WWEJ00193) $15.00 each
The Coach (WWEJ00194) $15.00 each
Christian (WWEJ00195) $15.00 each

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 15.5
Eric Bischoff (WWEJ00197) $15.00 each
Simon Dean (WWEJ00199) $15.00 each
Shannon Moore (WWEJ00200) $15.00 each
Heidenreich (WWEJ00201) $15.00 each
Scotty 2 Hotty (WWEJ00202) $15.00 each

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 16
Undertaker (WWEJ00208) $15.00 each
Call for others or check website.

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 16.5
John Cena (WWEJ00212) $15.00 each
Shawn Michaels (WWEJ00214) $15.00 each
Viscera (WWEJ00217) $15.00 each
Call for others or check website.

PPV Series 8 New Years Revolution™
Maven (WWEJ00331) $10.00 each
Eugene with shirt (WWEJ00332) $10.00 each
Shawn Michaels (WWEJ00335) $10.00 each

PPV Series 9 The Return Of ECW
Paul Heyman (WWEJ00337) $15.00 each
Tommy Dreamer (WWEJ00338) $15.00 each
Rob Van Dam (WWEJ00339) $15.00 each
Bubba Ray Dudley (WWEJ00340) $15.00 each
D-Von Dudley (WWEJ00341) $15.00 each
Tazz (WWEJ00342) $15.00 each
Steve Austin (WWEJ00343) $15.00 each
Kurt Angle (WWEJ00343) $15.00 each
Eric Bischoff (WWEJ00345) $15.00 each
Tajiri (WWEJ00346) $15.00 each
Rey Mysterio (WWEJ00347) $15.00 each
JBL (WWEJ00348) $15.00 each
Complete set of 12 (WWEJ00349) $150.00 set

Classic Superstars Series 9
Bam Bam Bigelow (WWEJ00520) $15.00 each
Paul Bearer (WWEJ00521) $15.00 each
Kamala (WWEJ00522) $15.00 each
Papa Shango (WWEJ00523) $15.00 each
The Godfather (WWEJ00524) $15.00 each
Harley Race (AWA) (WWEJ00525) $15.00 each
Akeem (WWEJ00526) $15.00 each
Animal (WWEJ00527) $15.00 each
Hawk (WWEJ00528) $15.00 each
Ric Flair (WWEJ00529) $15.00 each
Complete set of 10 (WWEJ00530) $120.00 set

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 17
Nunzio (WWEJ00220) $15.00 each
Hardcore Holly (WWEJ00221) $15.00 each
Steven Richards (WWEJ00222) $15.00 each
Orlando Jordan (WWEJ00223) $15.00 each
Paul London (WWEJ00224) $15.00 each
Tajiri (WWEJ00225) $10.00 each
Complete set of 6 (WWEJ00226) $70.00 set

Ruthless Aggression™ Series 17.5
Batista (WWEJ00227) $15.00 each
John Cena (WWEJ00228) $15.00 each
Rey Mysterio (WWEJ00229) $15.00 each
Shawn Michaels (WWEJ00230) $15.00 each
Hurricane (WWEJ00231) $15.00 each
Undertaker (WWEJ00232) $15.00 each
Complete set of 6 (WWEJ00233) $70.00 set

Adrenaline 2 Packs Series 16
MNM (WWEJ00427) $16.00 set
John Cena & Chris Jericho (WWEJ00428) $16.00 set
Batista & JBL (WWEJ00429) $16.00 set
Complete Set of 3 (WWEJ00430) $45.00 set

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Randy Orton (collage) (WWEP213)
Batista (collage) (WWEP218)
Joy Giovanni (WWEP223)
Torrie Wilson (studio shot) (WWEP016)
Torrie Wilson (black bikni) (WWEP191)
Victoria (studio) (WWEP135)
Trish Stratus (studio shot) (WWEP018)
Stacy Keibler (green suit) (WWEP134)
Evolution (new group shot) (WWEP186)
Rey Mysterio (arms crossed) (WWEP020)
Ric Flair (in robe) (WWEP025)
Shawn Michaels (slamming Ric Flair) (WWEP029)
Chris Jericho (with vest) (WWEP031)
Undertaker (falling on John Cena) (WWEP035)
John Cena (with U.S. Title) (WWEP193)
Shawn Michaels (kneeling) (WWEP170)
Undertaker (entrance) (WWEP185)
Batista (facing Snitsky) (WWEP201)
Rey Mysterio (with car) (WWEP157)
Christy Hemme (studio) (WWEP159)
JBL (in Limo) (WWEP180)
Edge (at entrance) (WWEP144)
Batista (holding belt) (WWEP225)
John Cena (Chain Gang jersey) (WWEP224)
John Cena (Word Life Shirt) (WWEP220)
John Cena (collage) (WWEP219)
Shawn Michaels (collage) (WWEP212)
John Cena (holding U.S. belt) (WWEP091)
Stacy Keibler (Bra & Panties Match) (WWEP096)
John Cena (studio) (WWEP097)
Miss Jackie (cheerleader) (WWEP095)
Kurt Angle (studio) (WWEP090)
Eddie Guerrero (holding belt) (WWEP092)
Rob Van Dam (studio) (WWEP087)
Big Show (bald look) (WWEP163)
Chris Benoit (doing Crossface) (WWEP0062)
Lita (in net shirt) (WWEP0066)

Exclusive 8x10 Photos — $5.00 each

Batista (WWEPEX01)
John Cena (WWEPEX02)
Rey Mysterio (WWEPEX03)
Stacy Keibler (WWEPEX04)
Trish Stratus (WWEPEX06)
Torrie Wilson (WWEPEX05)

T-Shirts $20.00 each

Sizes available: ADULT: M, L, XL, XXL

100% Cotton

Batista (The Animal) (WWEAT396)
John Cena (Word Life) (WWEAT397)
John Cena (Thug-A-Nomics) (WWEAT414)
Hulk Hogan (Hulkamania) (WWEAT415)
Carlito (I Know Cool) (WWEAT412)
ECW (One Night Stand) (WWEAT409)
Shelton Benjamin (Ain't No Stoppin' Me) (WWEAT406)
Mexicools (Picture) (WWEAT413)

Authentic TV Shirts $25.00 each

Sizes available: ADULT: M, L, XL, XXL

John Cena (Champ is Here) (WWEATTV129)
John Cena (Kick Ass, Take Names) (WWEATTV144)
Hulk Hogan (Hulkamania) (WWEATTV138)
Batista (Unleashed) (WWEATTV146)
Triple H (Cross and Skulls) (WWEATTV149)
Mexicools (WWEATTV145)
Rey Mysterio (Mask Logo) (WWEATTV131)

Exclusive T-Shirts

Adult Size - $20.00 each
Kid Size - $15.00 each

Sizes available: ADULT: M, L, XL, XXL
KIDS: M (10-12), L (14-16), XL (18-20)

Batista — Adult Size (WWEATEX02) Kid Size (WWEKTEX02)
John Cena — Adult Size (WWEATEX03) Kid Size (WWEKTEX03)
Divas — Adult Size (WWEATEX04) Kid Size (WWEKTEX04)
Rey Mysterio — Adult Size (WWEATEX01) Kid Size (WWEKTEX01)

John Cena Chain Gang Replica Pendant

Available in both actual size and in kid size! Now you can be a true Chain Gang Soldier with the official John Cena Chain Gang Soldier Spinning Replica Pendant! This is an exact replica of the pendant worn by Cena on WWE Television. The pendant is adorned with over 500 faux diamonds and has a 3 dimensional spinning center plate showcasing the Chain Gang Soldier logo. The side of the pendant features Cena's "You want some, come get some" slogan in three-dimensional lettering. The pendant comes with a wooden WWE collector's case.

Actual Size (WWERP01) $199.00 each
Kid Size (WWERPKID02) $99.00 each

John Cena Chain Gang Spinning Pendant

$20.00 each (WWEPENDANT043)

John Cena WWE Title Spinning Pendant

$25.00 each (WWEPENDANT046)

John Cena US (spinning)

$15.00 each (WWEPENDANT041)

Pendants $15.00 each

Rey Mysterio (spinning) (WWEPENDANT042)
Kane mask pendant (WWEPENDANT011)
Stacy Keibler pendant (WWEPENDANT005)
Trish Stratus logo pendant (WWEPENDANT006)
Undertaker devil head pendant (WWEPENDANT010)
Triple H logo pendant (WWEPENDANT013)
Shawn Michaels HBK pendant (WWEPENDANT008)
Matt Hardy V1 pendant (WWEPENDANT012)
Rey Mysterio 619 logo pendant (WWEPENDANT017)
Rey Mysterio mask pendant (WWEPENDANT019)
Randy Orton (RKO) (WWEPENDANT040)
Batista (WWEPENDANT032)
HBK (crossed swords) (WWEPENDANT039)
Undertaker (symbol) (WWEPENDANT035)
Triple H (symbol) (WWEPENDANT036)
Cena (Word Life logo) (WWEPENDANT037)
Edge (symbol) (WWEPENDANT038)
Triple H logo pendant (WWEPENDANT022)
John Cena (Word Life) (WWEPENDANT025)

DVDs by TITLE

Shawn Michaels: From the Vault	(WWEDVD27)	$30.00
Trish Stratus	(WWEDVD33)	$25.00
The Monday Night War	(WWEDVD45)	$25.00
Armageddon 2003	(WWEDVD40)	$25.00
Survivor Series 2003	(WWEDVD39)	$25.00
Undertaker: He Buries Them Alive	(WWEDVD43)	$10.00
Mick Foley: Greatest Hits & Misses	(WWEDVD41)	$30.00
Blood Bath: Steel Cage Matches	(WWEDVD35)	$30.00
John Cena: Word Life	(WWEDVD47)	$25.00
Royal Rumble 2004	(WWEDVD46)	$25.00
Before They Were Superstars: Vol. 2	(WWEDVD18)	$25.00
Raw 10th Anniversary	(WWEDVD20)	$25.00
Divas: Desert Heat	(WWEDVD21)	$25.00
No Way Out 2003	(WWEDVD22)	$25.00
Unforgiven 2003	(WWEDVD36)	$25.00
No Mercy 2003	(WWEDVD38)	$25.00
Rey Mysterio	(WWEDVD24)	$25.00
WrestleMania XIX	(WWEDVD23)	$30.00
WrestleMania XX	(WWEDVD50)	$35.00
Divas : South of the Border	(WWEDVD49)	$25.00
No Way Out 2004	(WWEDVD48)	$25.00
Backlash 2004	(WWEDVD51)	$25.00
Hall of Fame 2004	(WWEDVD53)	$30.00
Judgment Day 2004	(WWEDVD52)	$25.00
Bad Blood 2004	(WWEDVD55)	$25.00
The Great American Bash 2004	(WWEDVD57)	$25.00
Vengeance 2004	(WWEDVD58)	$25.00
Chris Benoit: Hard Knocks	(WWEDVD56)	$30.00
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Shawn Michaels: Boyhood Dream	(WWEDVD60)	$10.00
History of WrestleMania	(WWEDVD61)	$10.00
Judgment Day 2005	(WWEDVD81)	$25.00
ECW One Night Stand	(WWEDVD82)	$25.00
Vengeance 2005	(WWEDVD83)	$25.00
Tombstone: The History of The Undertaker	(WWEDVD85)	$35.00
No Mercy 2005	(WWEDVD95)	$25.00
The Bret Hart Story	(WWEDVD96)	$35.00
Taboo Tuesday 2005	(WWEDVD97)	$25.00
Survivor Series 2005	(WWEDVD98)	$25.00
Jake Roberts: Pick Your Poison	(WWEDVD84)	$35.00
WrestleMania: The Complete Anthology	(WWEDVD69)	$290.00
WrestleMania I-V Box Set	(WWEDVD90)	$70.00
WrestleMania VI-X Box Set	(WWEDVD91)	$70.00
WrestleMania XI-XV Box Set	(WWEDVD92)	$70.00
WrestleMania XVI-XX Box Set	(WWEDVD93)	$70.00
Eddie Guerrero: Cheating Death, Stealing Life	(WWEDVD62)	$30.00
Unforgiven 2004	(WWEDVD63)	$25.00
Rise & Fall of ECW	(WWEDVD64)	$30.00
No Mercy 2004	(WWEDVD65)	$25.00
Taboo Tuesday	(WWEDVD66)	$25.00
Survivor Series 2004	(WWEDVD67)	$25.00
Armageddon 2005	(WWEDVD68)	$25.00
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Best of Intercontinental Matches	(WWEDVD71)	$10.00
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New Year's Revolution 2005	(WWEDVD73)	$25.00
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No Way Out 2005	(WWEDVD75)	$25.00
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WrestleMania 21	(WWEDVD77)	$35.00
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movie, *See No Evil*) on any one of several big-screen TVs and headed into the interactive booths to record themselves calling a WWE match or impersonating their favorite WWE personalities.

The booths proved to be some of the biggest draws, as fans lined up for hours, then left proudly clutching their souvenir DVDs. One fan, draped in several hundred dollars' worth of championship belts, emerged from the "Show Us Your *Raw* Character" booth with a mile-wide smile. "I've always wanted to do that!" he said proudly. Other fans returned to the booths two or three times, trying to nail that perfect take.

> **"I love getting to meet the people face to face and shake their hands, take pictures, get to know them a little bit."**
> **— *Ashley***

On top of the various attractions available at the *Fan Axxess Tour,* fans also have the unique opportunity to meet, chat with and get a photo with their favorite Superstars. The line to meet "The Coach" and Ashley stretched well into the mall, with fans barely able to contain their excitement.

"I've been here since school got out!" said one fan, jumping up and down excitedly. "How often do you get to meet the people you watch on TV every week?"

Indeed, the approachability factor is one of the *Fan Axxess Tour's* biggest selling points.

"We're very approachable," Hillbilly Jim said. "We know that what we do wouldn't matter without the fans. We don't take the attitude that we're too good for the fans. We don't want to punish our fans, we want to embrace them, because they embrace us."

Ron Simmons, also on hand for the tour, was likewise grateful for the chance to meet fans, both old and new.

"People come up to me and tell me they used to watch me all the time," he said with a smile. "What better feeling is there than that?

In Stamford, "The Coach" and Ashley came out to hang with their fans and stayed well into the night to sign every picture and shake every hand. Fans ranging from young kids to old men dutifully lined up, holding everything from classic board games to magazines and publicity shots. And, without fail, the Superstars signed every one.

Ashley, on the road to her first *WrestleMania,* was thrilled for the chance to meet some of the people who helped her win the 2005 Diva Search.

"I love stuff like this, I love doing signings," she said. "I love getting to meet the people face to face and shake their hands, take pictures, get to know them a little bit."

Even "The Coach" got into the spirit of the event, although he had a slightly different view of things.

"Today was a special opportunity," he said. "Not really for me, but for the fans. It's rare that I get the chance to come out and shake hands and really meet all the people who have made 'The Coach.'"

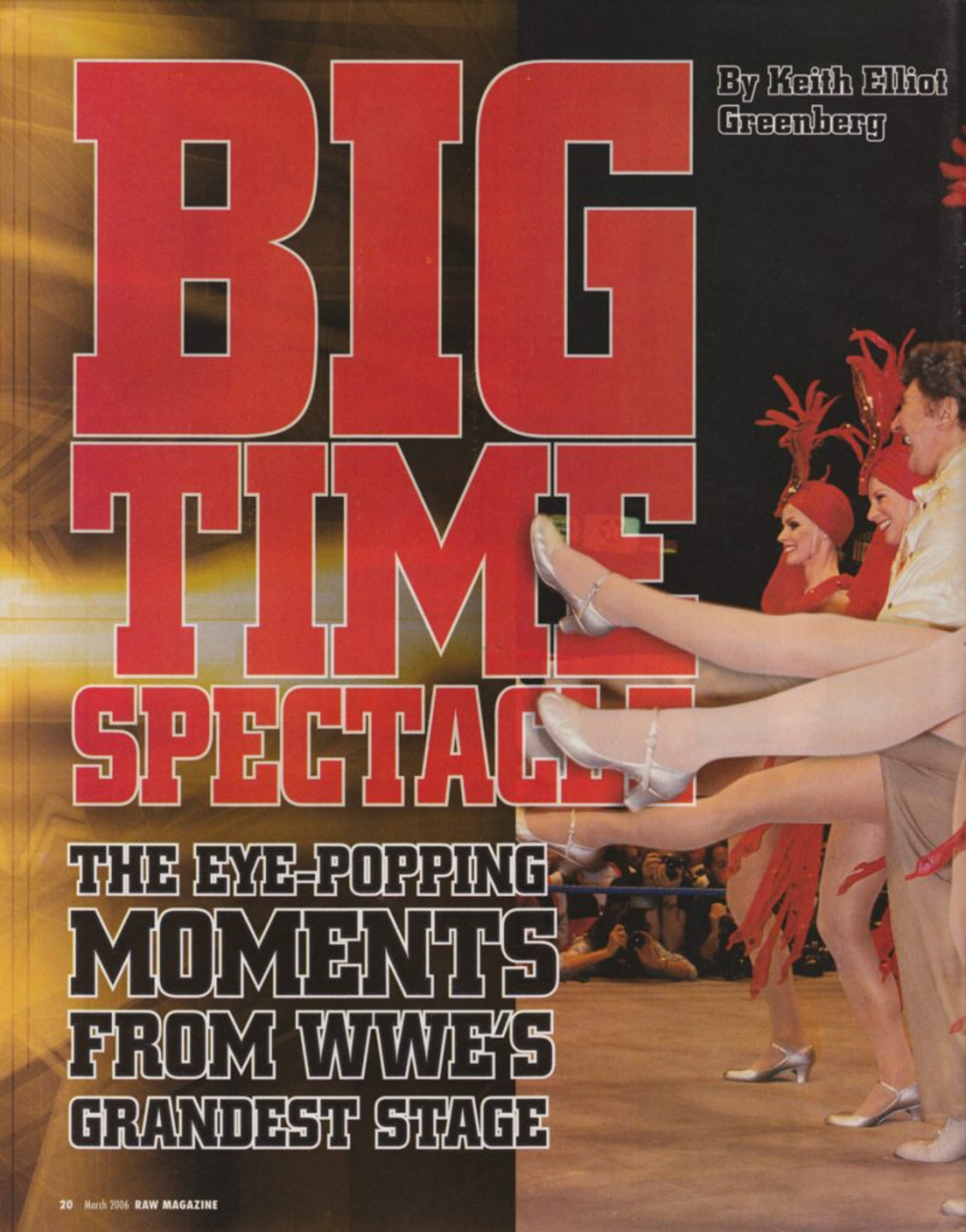
With the first night of the *Axxess* tour behind him and the entire tour stretching out ahead, Hillbilly Jim relaxed in his trailer and reflected on the tour and what it means, both to him and the fans.

"I have nothing but absolute pride to be a part of this whole thing," he said. "This is all about the fans. It's about 22 years of *WrestleMania* support and across-the-board support for WWE. This is a celebration of them, and of *WrestleMania*." ■

The *Fan Axxess Tour* runs until *WrestleMania 22* on April 2, 2005. For information and a complete tour schedule, check out the *Fan Axxess Tour* website at: www.wwe.com/shows/wrestlemania/fanaxxesstour/

BIG TIME SPECTACLE

By Keith Elliot Greenberg



THE EYE-POPPING MOMENTS FROM WWE'S GRANDEST STAGE

WrestleMania truly is the biggest show going in sports-entertainment. And, just like any big show worth its salt, it's packed floor to ceiling with more eye-popping, jaw-dropping moments than your average three-ring circus. Where else are you going to see Hillbilly Jim and King Kong Bundy teaming up with a gaggle of midgets? Or Liberace high-kicking inside the ring with the Rockettes? Even if one goes to *WrestleMania* just to watch wrestling, they're guaranteed to see a few other things they couldn't have possibly imagined. With that in mind, we present to you the *WrestleMania* moments that best define Big Time Spectacle.

DANCING WITH THE STARS

WrestleMania, March 31, 1985
Madison Square Garden, New York, NY

When WWE presented the inaugural *WrestleMania*, the organization realized that it had to make an impact. Already the event was receiving international media coverage because of the presence of pop siren Cyndi Lauper in Wendi Richter's corner and TV tough-guy Mr. T in the main event. But that wasn't enough for WWE impresario Vince McMahon. Betting his personal fortune, he made the spectacular available via pay-per-view and signed up even more stars.

Former New York Yankees manager Billy Martin was the special ring announcer for the main event. Muhammad Ali was a special referee. And Liberace was the guest timekeeper.

But Liberace, renowned for glaring jewelry and glittering outfits, was not content to sit at ringside and use his piano-playing acumen simply to clang the bell. Instead, the flamboyant showman entered the ring before the match and high-stepped it with Radio City Music Hall's famous Rockettes.

It was an indelible New York moment.

TRAVELING THROUGH TIME

WrestleMania IX, April 4, 1993 Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, NV

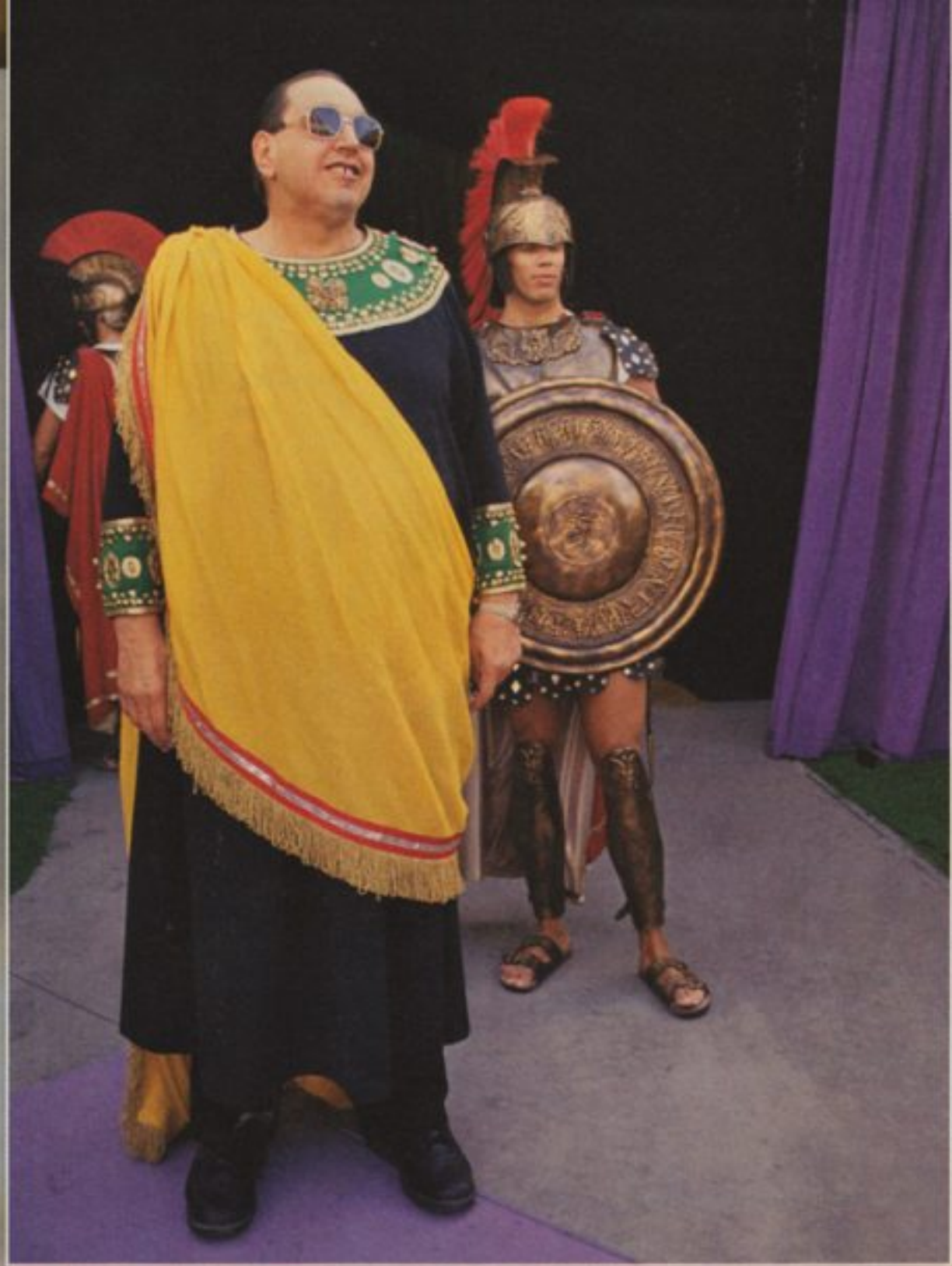
There was a Roman holiday theme to *WrestleMania IX* at Las Vegas' renowned Caesars Palace, and many of the WWE personalities were adorned in the attire of the fallen empire. Announcer Gorilla Monsoon welcomed pay-per-view viewers to the show—and introduced the organization's newest commentator, Jim "J.R." Ross, who emerged clad in a toga.

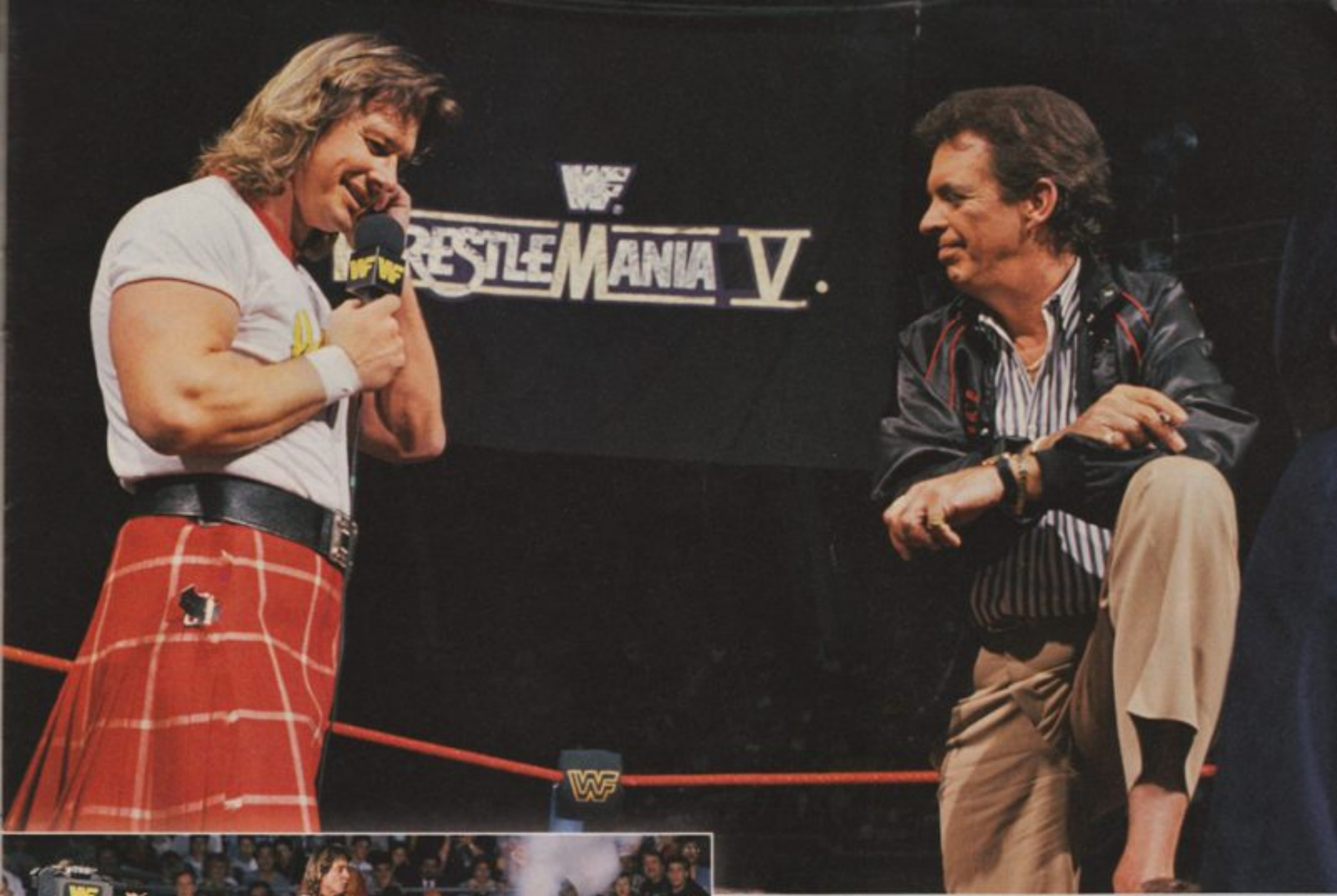
He was a long way from Oklahoma.

In keeping with the mood of the day, ring announcer Howard Finkel renamed himself Finkus Maximus. From center ring, he presented two special guests—Caesar and Cleopatra, who'd apparently traveled through time to take part in the special occasion.

And there was more to come. Randy "Macho Man" Savage, another member of the announcing team, arrived escorted by a bevy of "vestal virgins." And the irrepressible Bobby "The Brain" Heenan came out riding a camel—backward.

Rome may not have been burning that day, but Vegas was!





WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S PIPER

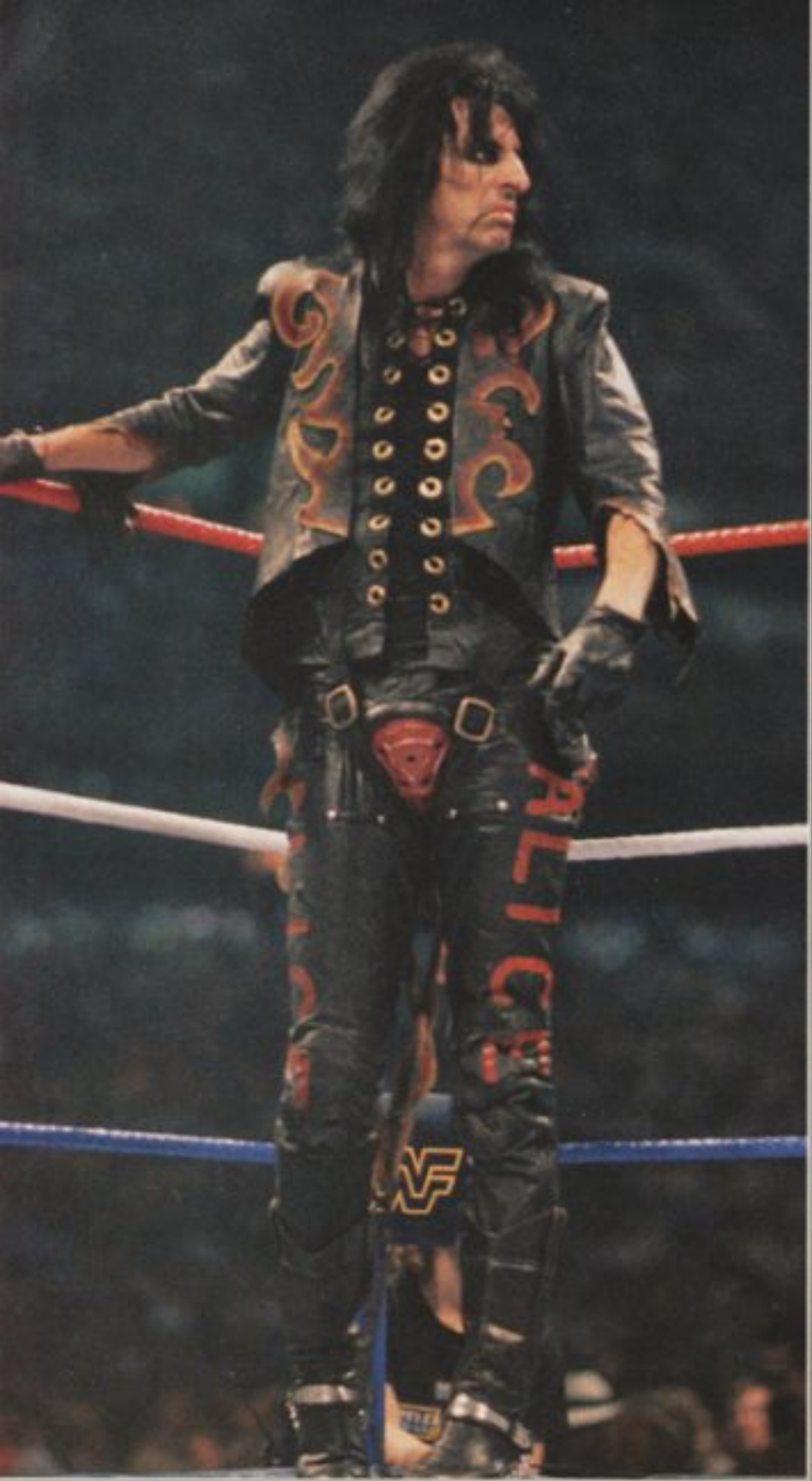
WrestleMania V, April 2, 1989 Trump Plaza, Atlantic City, NJ

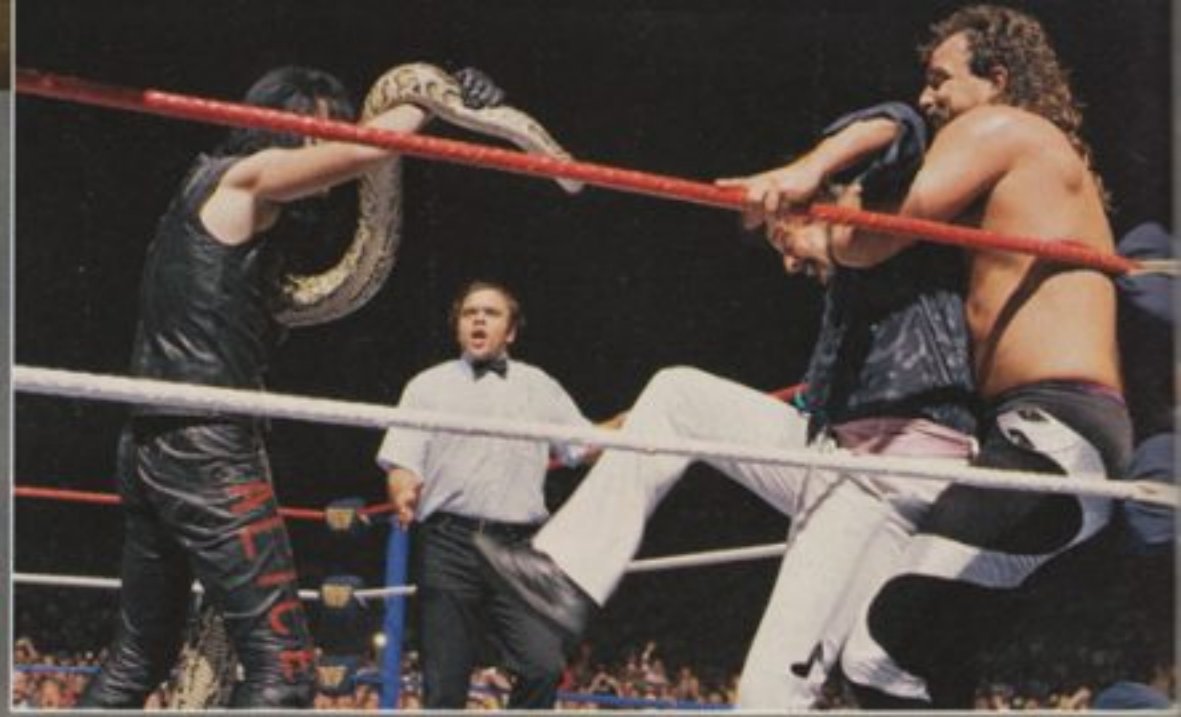
In 1989, one of the most controversial figures on American television was Morton Downey, Jr., a crazed talk show host known to scream in guests' faces, cigarette in hand.

WWE fans couldn't help but compare his show to *Piper's Pit*, the manic interview segment hosted by a frenzied "Rowdy" Roddy Piper.

It was only natural to wonder about what would occur if Piper and Downey were ever placed on the same set. At *WrestleMania V*, fantasy suddenly became reality.

Piper and Downey squared off against each other on a special edition of *Piper's Pit*. Neither bothered with polite small talk, as they bombarded one another with insults instead. Throughout the exchange, Downey continuously puffed on a cigarette and blew smoke in "Hot Rod's" face. Piper warned Downey to stop several times before he finally doused the cigarette, and Downey, with a fire extinguisher.





ALICE COOPER PLAYS A REPTILIAN ROLE

WrestleMania III, March 29, 1987
Pontiac Silverdome, Pontiac Michigan

In the 1980s, rock royalty began jockeying to participate in *WrestleMania*. At *WrestleMania 2*, for instance, Ozzy Osbourne and Capt. Lou Albano backed up the British Bulldogs when they won the World Tag Team Championship at Chicago's Rosemont Horizon. But at *WrestleMania III*, Alice Cooper opted to take a more active role in the action.

Cooper gained a reputation as the father of "shock rock" by smearing his eyes with mascara, decapitating mannequins on stage, and singing about topics that made proper society uncomfortable. When he and Jake "The Snake" Roberts met prior to *WrestleMania III*, they greeted one another like kindred spirits.

Jake's *WrestleMania III* adversary was a man partial to a different form of music. With his slicked-back pompadour and garish jump suits, the Honky Tonk Man fancied himself as an incarnation of Elvis. The difference was that Honky believed that he was actually a better entertainer than Elvis.

His one weakness: a fear of snakes, most notably Jake's python, Damien. Cooper harbored no such phobias. So when the battle wasn't going to his liking, he lifted up Damien and hurled him onto the Honky Tonk Man's manager, Jimmy Hart. Both Hart and Honky were terrified and, as Cooper flexed his skinny arms, Roberts earned the victory.

CLASH OF THE LEVIATHANS

WrestleMania 21, April 3, 2005
STAPLES Center, Los Angeles, CA

As a mammoth of the sumo world, Akebono became a fabled character in Japan, while Big Show, a former WWE and WCW Champion, was a colossus whose fame rivaled only that of his hero, Andre the Giant.

The pair had cultivated a healthy respect for one another. Yet, since both were competitors at heart, they also wanted to lock up in combat.

At *WrestleMania 21*, they agreed to meet in an official sumo match. With no sumo training, Big Show went into the contest as the underdog. But because of his size and storied toughness, Big Show believed that he had a chance to pull off a stunning upset.

Indeed, it was a difficult task for Akebono to power Big Show around the ring. But, as a former Sumo Grand Champion, Akebono eventually scored the win.

Big Show is said to look forward to the day when they meet again, this time, under WWE rules.

THE GAME OF ROCK

WrestleMania X-7, April 1, 2001
Astrodome, Houston, TX

If Triple H ever had a counterpart in the rock world, it was Lemmy Kilmister.

The Motörhead lead singer has been a magnet for controversy since he first slung his bass guitar over his neck. A madman on and off stage, Lemmy enjoys a cult following because he takes his performance places where others wouldn't dare. Like Triple H, he lives his job 24 hours a day.

At *WrestleMania X-7*, Lemmy paid Triple H the ultimate tribute, as he complemented the "Cerebral Assassin's" ring entrance with a gravelly voiced rendition of his theme song.

Triple H actually lost his match to Undertaker that night. But before going down, "The Game" bloodied up his adversary—just the way Lemmy would like it.

REMEMBERING THE GREAT ONES

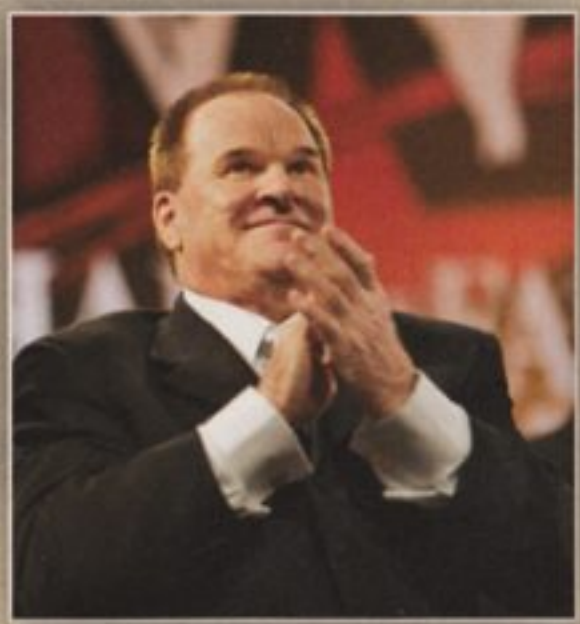
WrestleMania XX, March 14, 2004 Madison Square Garden New York, NY

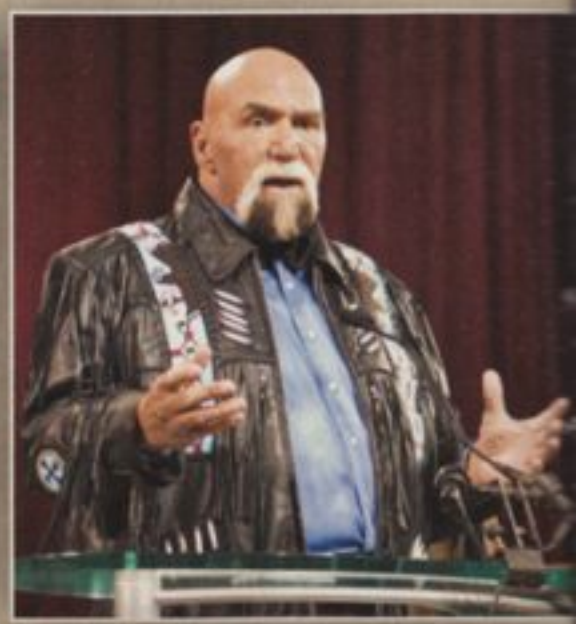
As the historic 20th *WrestleMania* dawned, WWE decided to pay homage to those who helped build the industry.

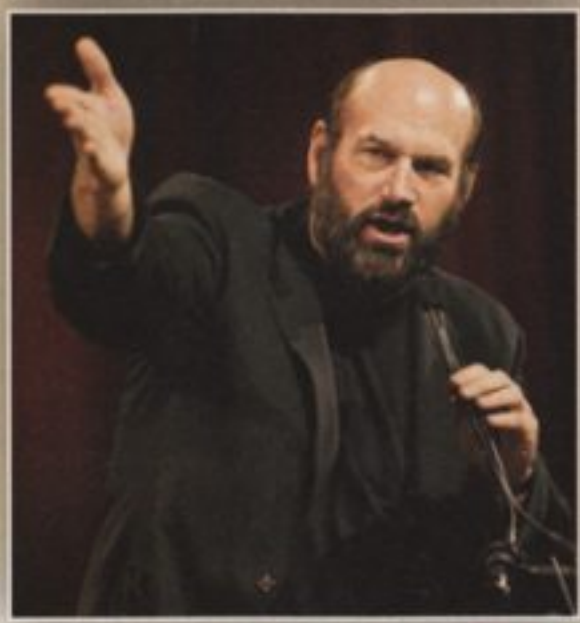
There had been WWE Hall of Fame inductions before, but never of this magnitude. With Mean Gene Okerlund—the announcer perhaps most closely associated with the early *WrestleMania* years—as master of ceremonies, the Class of 2004 was introduced to the ravenous crowd at Madison Square Garden.

Former Minnesota Gov. Jesse "The Body" Ventura and the man he idolized as a college student, "Superstar" Billy Graham, were among the honorees. They were joined by former WWE Champion Sgt. Slaughter, former seven-time NWA Champion Harley Race, former Intercontinental champions Tito Santana, Don "The Magnificent" Muraco and Greg "The Hammer" Valentine, and manager Bobby "The Brain" Heenan. Big John Studd and the Junkyard Dog were inducted posthumously.

Even Pete Rose, who'd rumbled with Kane at a few *WrestleManias*, was included in WWE's Celebrity Wing—a not-so-subtle swipe at Major League Baseball for refusing to induct its all-time hits leader.







THE RATTLESNAKE IN THE *PIT*

WrestleMania 21, April 3, 2005 STAPLES Center, Los Angeles, CA

With the creation of *WWE 24/7*, along with the availability of videos and DVDs from WWE's earlier years, fans had begun to fantasize about dream scenarios. And, at *WrestleMania 21*, WWE delivered one: a special *Piper's Pit*, featuring none other than Stone Cold Steve Austin.

There was a sense of danger in the air. Both Piper and Austin are known for speaking their minds—and frequently embarrassing the very people who sign their paychecks.

Neither man disappointed, tossing both good-natured and pointed jibes at one another. In the midst of the showdown, Carlito appeared on the scene and ridiculed both icons. Piper's response was to snatch Carlito's apple out of his hand and spit its chewed remnants in his face. The "Texas Rattlesnake" then thrilled the crowd by delivering a Stone Cold Stunner to the intruder and hurling him to ringside.

Austin and Piper now celebrated Stone Cold-style, spilling beer all over themselves and the ring. But before calling it a night, Austin couldn't resist giving a Stunner to "Hot Rod," as well. ■

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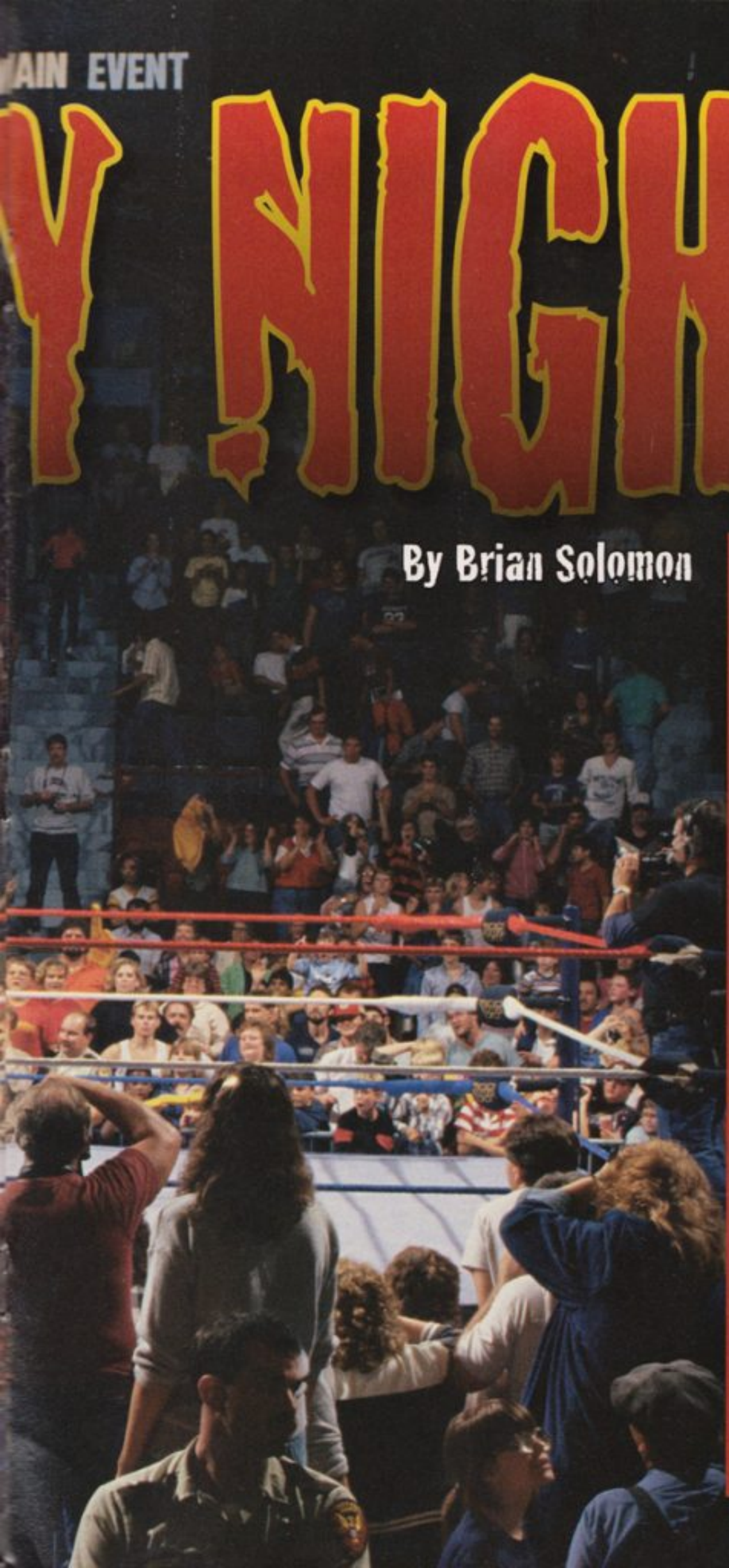
WrestleMania

SATURDAY A'RIGHT' FOR FIGHT'ING

A CLASSIC WWE TRADITION MAKES A MAJOR COMEBACK

Y NIGHT'S

By Brian Solomon



Mention the words *"Saturday Night's Main Event"* to anyone who was a WWE fan during the 1980s, and you are likely to hear a hyper-charged, nostalgic rant. Without question, the show is one of the most fondly remembered aspects of WWE from that era. The memories that it created linger on today in the hearts of millions. And now, there will be more memories made as *Saturday Night's Main Event* makes its triumphant return to NBC. On Saturday night, March 18, from Detroit's historic Cobo Hall, the tradition continues.

Nothing like it had ever been seen before. Before the age of monthly pay-per-view events, before *Raw* and *SmackDown*, pretty much the only way to see competitive action featuring top-flight Superstars was to buy a ticket and head down to your local arena. But for the first time, *Saturday Night's Main Event* brought the action right into your living room, for free. Once a month (later bi-monthly), fans could expect to see a WWE card worthy of any live event or pay-per-view. It also represented the first time wrestling had been featured on network television since the 1950s.

By the spring of 1985, WWE was riding the mightiest crest of popularity it had ever experienced. Hulk Hogan was at the top of his game as WWE Champion, and the inaugural *WrestleMania* had just changed the face of sports-entertainment forever. Catching on to this white-hot new movement in pop culture, NBC decided to take a chance, and history was made.

WEEKEND WARRIORS

Looking Back on Some of *SNME's* Signature Moments

Flag Match 10/5/85

All-American WWE Champion Hulk Hogan faced the ultimate Soviet menace, Nikolai Volkoff, in a match with national pride on the line. The Hulkster won and got to proudly wave the red, white and blue.

Friends No More 11/29/86

When "Rowdy" Roddy Piper returned to WWE in the fall of 1986, he found that his longtime associate "Cowboy" Bob Orton had turned traitor. Eventually, Orton had no choice but to pay the Piper in this emotionally charged match.

As Close As It Gets 1/3/87

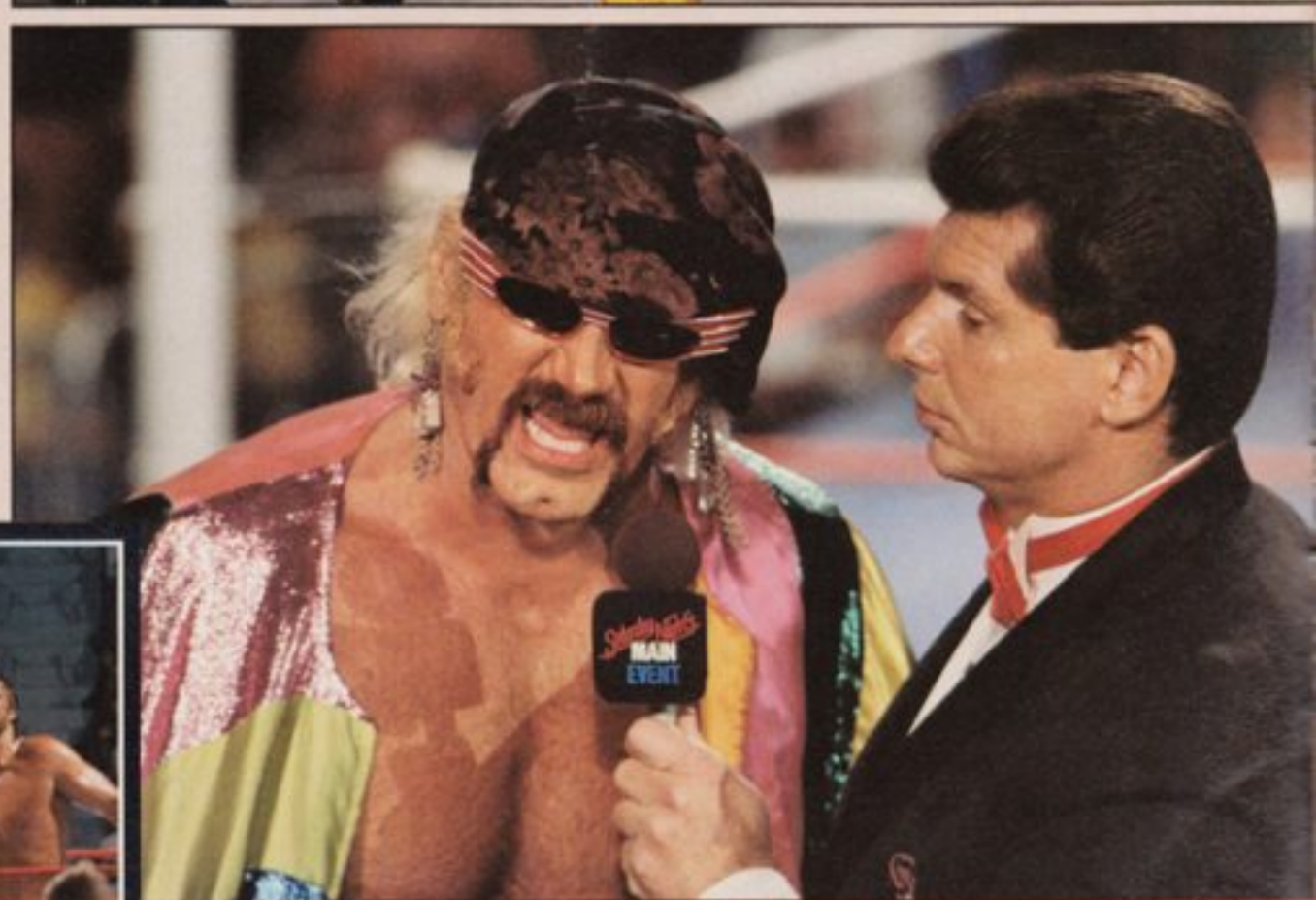
In one of the greatest Steel Cage Matches of all time, Hulk Hogan came within a hair of losing his WWE Championship to "Mr. Wonderful" Paul Orndorff. Both competitors went over the top of the cage and touched the arena floor simultaneously, and after several tense moments, the match was ordered resumed. After the restart, the Hulkster emerged victorious.

Don't Mess with a Giant 3/14/87

During a 20-man battle royal, "Leaping" Lanny Poffo made the mistake of crossing Andre the Giant. Andre had no problem headbutting Poffo with such viciousness that the bloodied high-flyer had to be carried from the ring on a stretcher.

The Mega-Powers Are Born 10/3/87

When the Honky Tonk Man used his cronies The Hart Foundation to help him manhandle Elizabeth



ay Night's EVENT

It was NBC executive Dick Ebersol who saw the potential in airing WWE. In charge of *Saturday Night Live* at the time, Ebersol felt that WWE was a strong enough ratings draw that it could be aired in the coveted late-night time-slot that had already been occupied by *SNL* for a decade. And so the vaunted TV comedy juggernaut stepped aside every few weeks to make way for a show that would truly knock the national audience on its collective ass.

With the production capabilities of NBC at its disposal, WWE produced a program that to this day still resonates with those who saw it. It was a simple formula, but one that worked in a big way.

At the top of the program, the two Superstars involved in the main event would deliver a backstage interview. This was followed by the unforgettable opening strains of "Obsession" by 1980's one-hit wonder Animotion (a song that longtime fans still associate with the show). The rest of the show would follow the interview/match format. In some ways, it was *Saturday Night's Main Event* that would be the template for the onslaught of pay-per-view spectaculars that was just a few years away.

In May 1985, a pilot special was taped from the Nassau Coliseum, a staple arena on the WWE circuit going

and put a beating on "Macho Man" Randy Savage, Liz enlisted the help of Hulk Hogan, helping to form a bond of legendary proportions.

Hard Time 5/27/89

With the WWE Championship once again around his waist, Hogan found himself in a bitter rivalry with the Big Boss Man. This titanic steel cage match was the culmination of that rivalry, with Hogan coming out the victor.

Trouble Brewing 1/27/90

After initial animosities between Hulk Hogan & Ultimate Warrior began days earlier at the *Royal Rumble*, the two Superstars found it hard to work well as a team against Mr. Perfect & The Genius. Their rift only grew wider, leading to their match at *WrestleMania VI*.

Like Father, Like Son 10/13/90

During Dusty Rhodes' match against Randy Savage, Dusty's son, Dustin, appeared in the front row to watch his dad wrestle. Little did he know he would become the target of a heinous assault by "Million-Dollar Man" Ted DiBiase & Virgil, which set off a bloody war.

No Justice Tonight 2/8/92

Fuming about being passed over for a title shot at *WrestleMania*, Sid Justice turned on No. 1 contender Hulk Hogan during a tag team match that pitted them against WWE Champion Ric Flair & Undertaker.

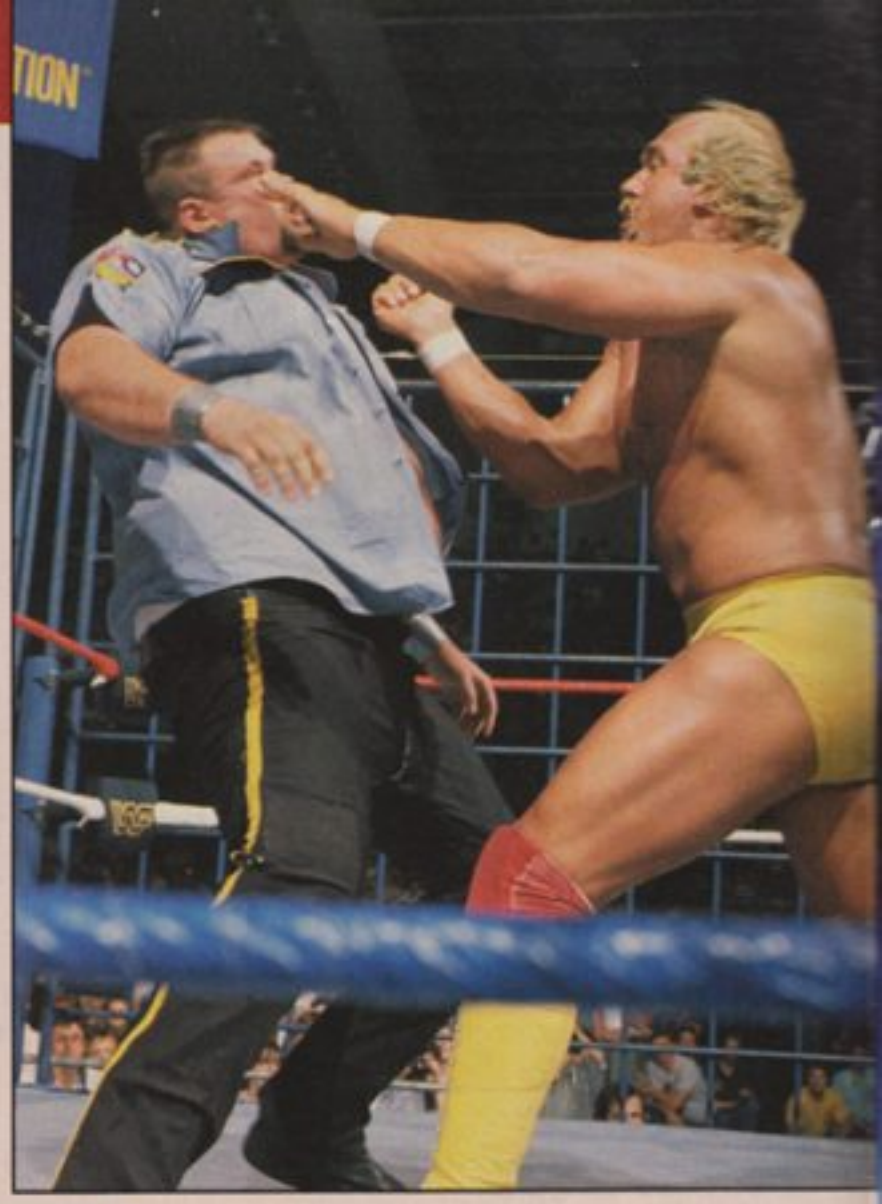
Heartbreak for the Bulldog 10/27/92

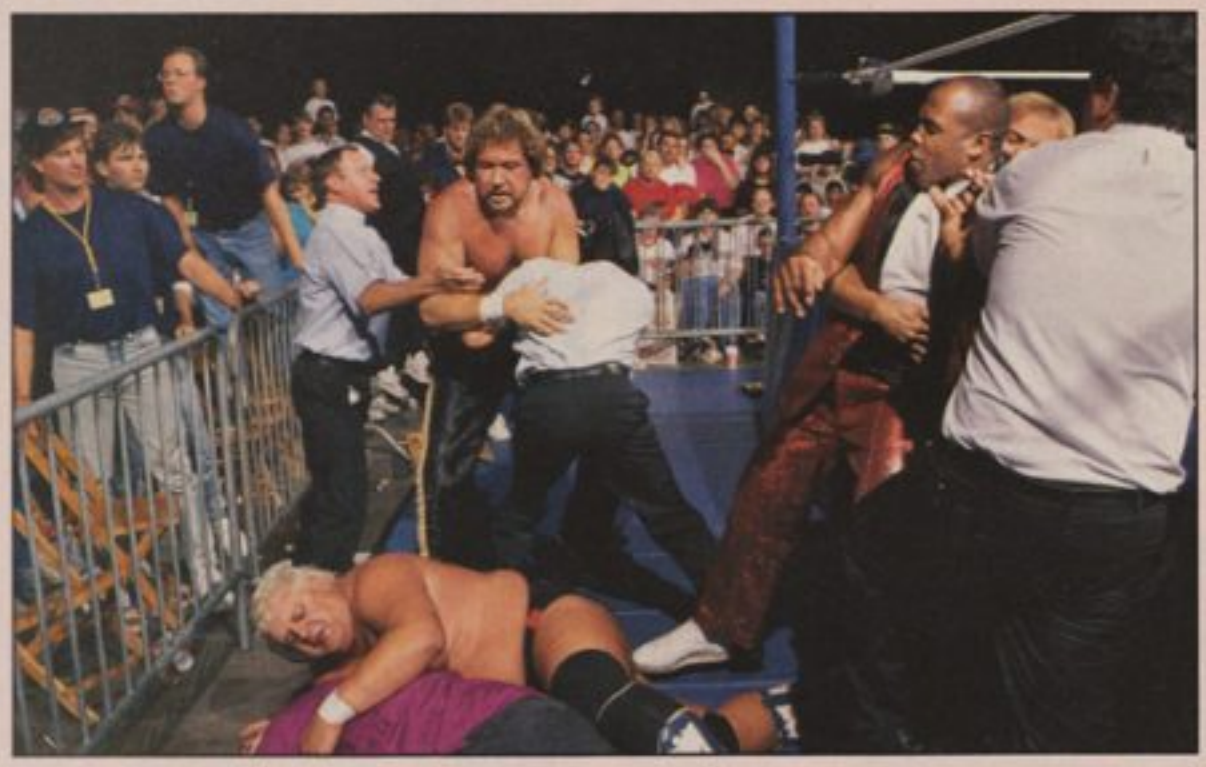
Less than two months after winning the Intercontinental Championship, the British Bulldog lost the gold to a brash young Shawn Michaels. It was the "Showstopper's" first title in WWE, and the only title change that ever occurred on *Saturday Night's Main Event*.

Animal" Steele to take on former titlists Barry Windham & Mike Rotundo and the ever-popular Ricky "The Dragon" Steamboat.

From that moment on, WWE went about the business of reinventing Saturday nights. NBC immediately picked up *Saturday Night's Main Event*, and it started on a monthly basis in October 1985.

For six years, *Saturday Night's Main Event* remained an integral part of the WWE phenomenon during one of its biggest boom periods. The formula was so successful that beginning in 1988, NBC even experimented with prime-time WWE specials, entitled simply *The Main Event*. Twenty-nine installments of *Saturday Night's Main Event* were produced for NBC





back to the 1970s. An audience of millions tuned in to a blockbuster WWE event the likes of which would previously be the exclusive viewing privilege of a paying live crowd. They saw Hulk Hogan defend the WWE Championship against "Rowdy" Roddy Piper's henchman "Cowboy" Bob Orton; Wendi Richter defend the Women's Championship she had won at *WrestleMania* against longtime champ The Fabulous Moolah; World Tag Team Champions Nikolai Volkoff & The Iron Sheik team with George "The

before the show's final airing in April 1991.

In 1992, Fox briefly picked up *Saturday Night's Main Event*, and aired two prime-time specials that year. But that was the last anyone has seen of the onetime cornerstone of WWE programming...until now. With *WrestleMania 22* mere weeks away, it is certain that this return of *SNME* will play a key role in the developments leading into that event—just as it did for so many *WrestleManias* of years gone by.

After almost 14 years on hiatus, *Saturday Night's Main Event* is back. Today's WWE roster—many of whom grew up watching the show as kids—will now finally get the chance to add

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GAME

By Jeremy Brown

Love him or hate him, you have to respect him.

In recent weeks, Triple H has referred to himself as the "measuring stick" for other Superstars who look to rule the world of sports-entertainment. From the mouth of anyone else, you might be able to dismiss it as hyperbole or chest-thumping bravado.

When Triple H says it? It's just the truth.

He came into WWE as the effete rich boy Hunter Hearst-Helmsley, but he has grown to become unquestionably the dominant WWE Superstar of this decade. With 10 straight *WrestleManias* and 10 World titles, Triple H is the measuring stick of WWE.

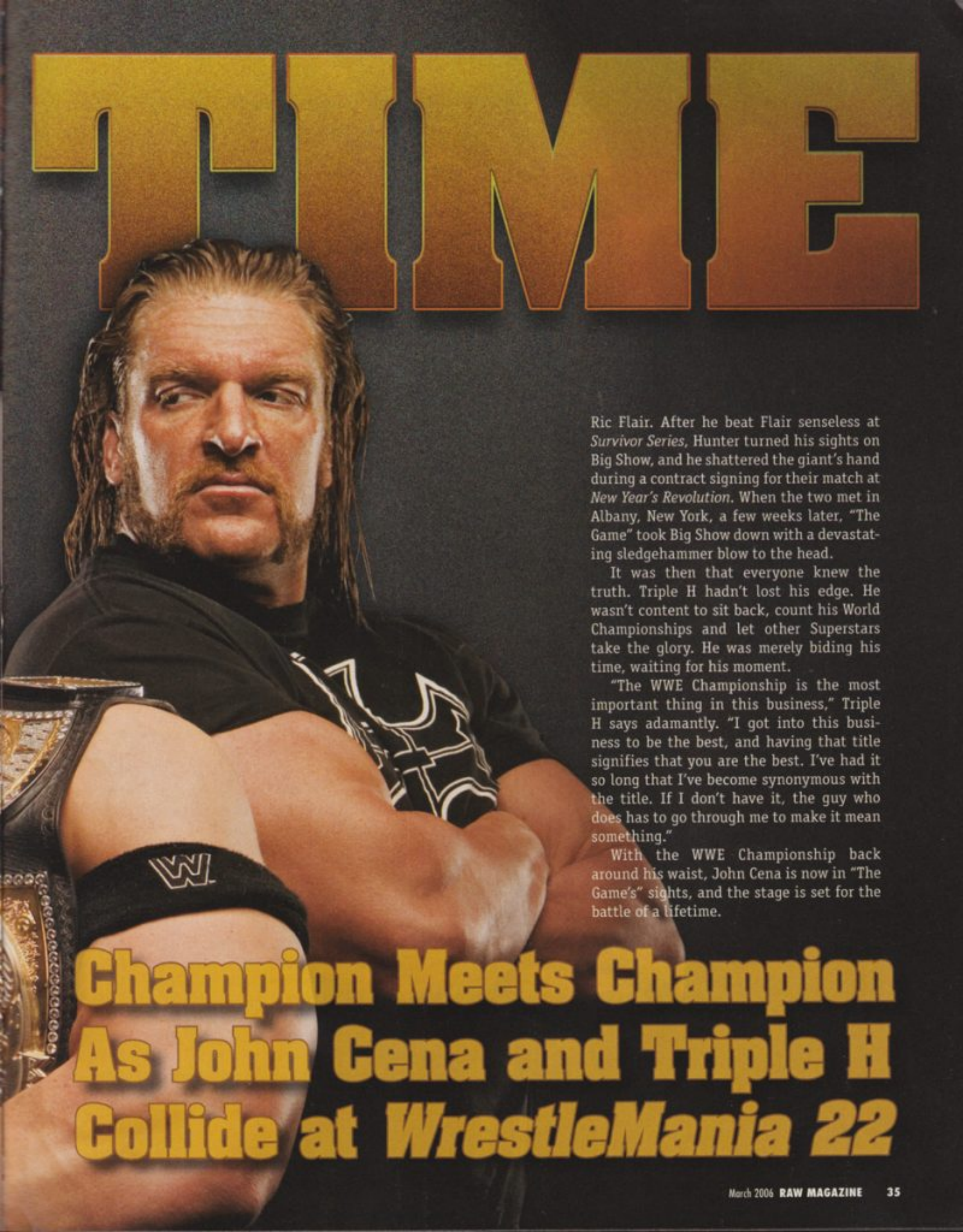
If you want to make a name for yourself, you've got to go through Triple H to do it. These are the facts, and they cannot be disputed. "I'm coming back to take my rightful place at the top," says "The Game," pacing backstage as he prepares for another match. "'The King of Kings' goes back on his throne at *WrestleMania*. John Cena is the one who has something to prove. Because until you go through me, until you beat me, you are not the best. John Cena has yet to do that. And at *WrestleMania 22*, we're going to find out if he can do it. I say he can't."

It has been nearly a year since Triple H has held a World title. Last April in Los Angeles, he lost the World Heavyweight Championship to Batista at *WrestleMania 21*. Twice he tried to get it back, and both times he was denied. With his engines revving at full speed, Triple H realized that the best way to get a World title back around his waist was to slow down and rethink his strategy. After all, he didn't earn the name "The Cerebral Assassin" for nothing.

After a short layoff, during which he retuned his body, Triple H returned to *Raw* leaner, meaner and hungrier than ever.

Within days of his first appearance, he shocked fans by turning on his longtime friend and ally,

TIME



Ric Flair. After he beat Flair senseless at *Survivor Series*, Hunter turned his sights on Big Show, and he shattered the giant's hand during a contract signing for their match at *New Year's Revolution*. When the two met in Albany, New York, a few weeks later, "The Game" took Big Show down with a devastating sledgehammer blow to the head.

It was then that everyone knew the truth. Triple H hadn't lost his edge. He wasn't content to sit back, count his World Championships and let other Superstars take the glory. He was merely biding his time, waiting for his moment.

"The WWE Championship is the most important thing in this business," Triple H says adamantly. "I got into this business to be the best, and having that title signifies that you are the best. I've had it so long that I've become synonymous with the title. If I don't have it, the guy who does has to go through me to make it mean something."

With the WWE Championship back around his waist, John Cena is now in "The Game's" sights, and the stage is set for the battle of a lifetime.

Champion Meets Champion As John Cena and Triple H Collide at *WrestleMania 22*

At *WrestleMania 21*, Cena won the WWE Championship from John "Bradshaw" Layfield and kicked off a dominating reign that lasted until *New Year's Revolution*.

That night, Cena saw his championship reign cut short when, in the aftermath of a punishing Elimination Chamber Match, Edge decided to cash in his "Money in the Bank" title shot. Mr. McMahon obliged him, ordering an on-the-spot title match.

Cena, bruised and bloodied from his battle in the Elimination Chamber, put up a fight, but it wasn't enough. Edge claimed the victory and strolled out of the Pepsi Arena with Lita on his arm and the gold around his waist.

"It was a wake-up call," Cena says of Edge's victory. "It taught me that everyone is coming for me, and that having the title makes you a target."

Three weeks later, however, Cena faced Edge again at the *Royal Rumble*. This time, he was ready. In the end, Edge was defeated and Cena clutched the WWE Championship yet again. Having reclaimed his title, it seemed that Cena was set to embark on yet another roll.

Enter "The Game."

This is Triple H's 11th straight *WrestleMania*, an event in which he holds a 6-4 record. "The Game" has gone on to notch some fairly impressive stats in WWE's signature event. For example, he is one of only two Superstars to successfully defend their World titles more than once at *WrestleMania*. The other Superstar? Hulk Hogan.

His résumé speaks for itself, but Triple H says that the victories of the past, as important as they are, are only setups for the conquests of the future.

"I'm going to prove to the world that I'm the best in the world, bar none," he says. "I'm going to do things in this business that no one has ever done before. Anyone can say what they want, they're a 'wrestling god' or whatever. But there's only one, and he's standing in front of you right now."

Although he did not go after Cena right away, "The Game" says it was always in the plan.

"I had some other business to attend to first," he says, "but once I got through that, the path was set. It was the immovable object meeting the irresistible force."

Of course, it would not be wise to count out John Cena. It is worth noting that, not only is Cena undefeated at *WrestleMania*, he has also won titles both times he competed. At *WrestleMania XX* in 2004, he beat Big Show and claimed the U.S. Championship, which started his march to the top. The following year at STAPLES Center in Los Angeles, Cena defeated JBL and became WWE Champion.

This is his first title defense at *WrestleMania*, but as far as title defenses go, Cena's proven that he's more than capable of holding his own. Following his win in L.A., Cena successfully defended his title seven times on pay-per-view. But the path of victory has now led him to this point, in a match that will help define his legacy.

"This is more than the biggest match of the year at the biggest event of the year," Cena says. "For me, this is a career moment. *WrestleMania* makes or breaks careers. This is my make-or-break match."

This match comes at a time in John Cena's career when he is at something of a crossroads. With fan support rising and falling, he knows that there's a lot riding on the showdown in Chicago.

"At a time when a lot of people are questioning what I'm about, this

CONQUESTS OF A CHAMPION

Since he first won the WWE Championship in 1999, Triple H's path has been marked by greatness. A 10-time World Champion, he has firmly established himself as one of WWE's all-time greats. With a possible 11th World title reign looming, we look back at the "Cerebral Assassin's" greatest victories.

August 23, 1999 – After he lost to Mankind the night before at *SummerSlam*, Triple H demanded a rematch, and even threatened to break Jim Ross's arm if it wasn't granted. He got his wish and defeated Mankind to claim his first WWE Championship.

September 26, 1999 – Shortly after he first won the WWE Championship, Triple H lost it to Mr. McMahon on *SmackDown* in Las Vegas. A few days later, McMahon vacated the title and decreed that it would be awarded to the winner of a "Six-Pack Challenge" at *Unforgiven*. Triple H plowed his way through Big Show, Kane, Mankind, Davey Boy Smith and The Rock to walk out as WWE Champion for a second time.

January 3, 2000 – The third time was the charm for Triple H when he won the WWE Championship back from Big Show on *Raw*. He had lost it to the massive Superstar only a few months prior at *Survivor Series* in a Triple-Threat Match that also included The Rock.

May 21, 2000 – Iron Man matches have always created legendary moments, and this 60-minute fracas between The Rock and "The Game" at

Judgment Day was no different. At the end, both men were battered, but it was Triple H who rose as WWE Champion.

March 17, 2002 – After a drought of nearly two years, Triple H claimed the Undisputed Championship from Chris Jericho at *WrestleMania X8* at Toronto's SkyDome.

September 2, 2002 – Following an announcement that then-Undisputed Champion Brock Lesnar would defend his title as part of *SmackDown* only, then-*Raw* general manager Eric Bischoff created a new title for his brand and crowned Triple H as World Heavyweight Champion. "The Game" successfully defended his title against Ric Flair that night.

December 15, 2002 – After an Elimination Chamber Match so brutal that it sent Triple H to the hospital, Shawn Michaels walked out of *Survivor Series* as the new World Heavyweight Champion. The next month, at *Armageddon*, "The Game" battled HBK in a two-out-of-three falls match wrought with dangerous stipulations. Triple H survived a Street Fight, Steel Cage Match and Ladder Match to win the title back.

December 14, 2003 – Another *Armageddon*, another title to win back. After he lost to Goldberg at *Unforgiven*, Triple H was primed to reclaim his title. The two locked up as part of

match is a great opportunity," Cena says. "But two teams make it to the Super Bowl, and not many people talk about the one that loses. So I know I've got to come out of this one on top."

When it comes down to title matches at *WrestleMania*, the old adage is proven wrong. Size, very often, does matter. At 6-foot-4 and 260 pounds, Triple H has three inches and 20 pounds on Cena. That definitely puts Cena at a disadvantage when it comes to pure muscle.

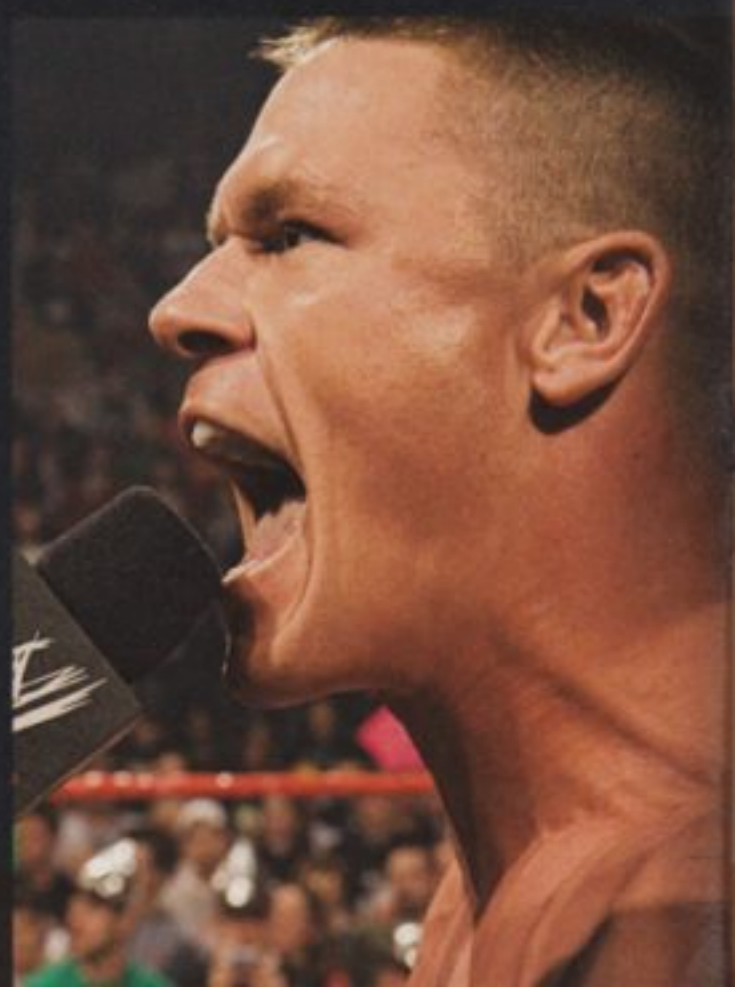
Just last year, Triple H was toppled by Batista, who outweighed "The Game" by 57 pounds. However, such a disparity has also worked to Cena's advantage. JBL came into *WrestleMania 21* with 5 inches and 49 pounds on Cena, and yet "The Doctor of Thuganomics" rose to the challenge to win the WWE Championship.

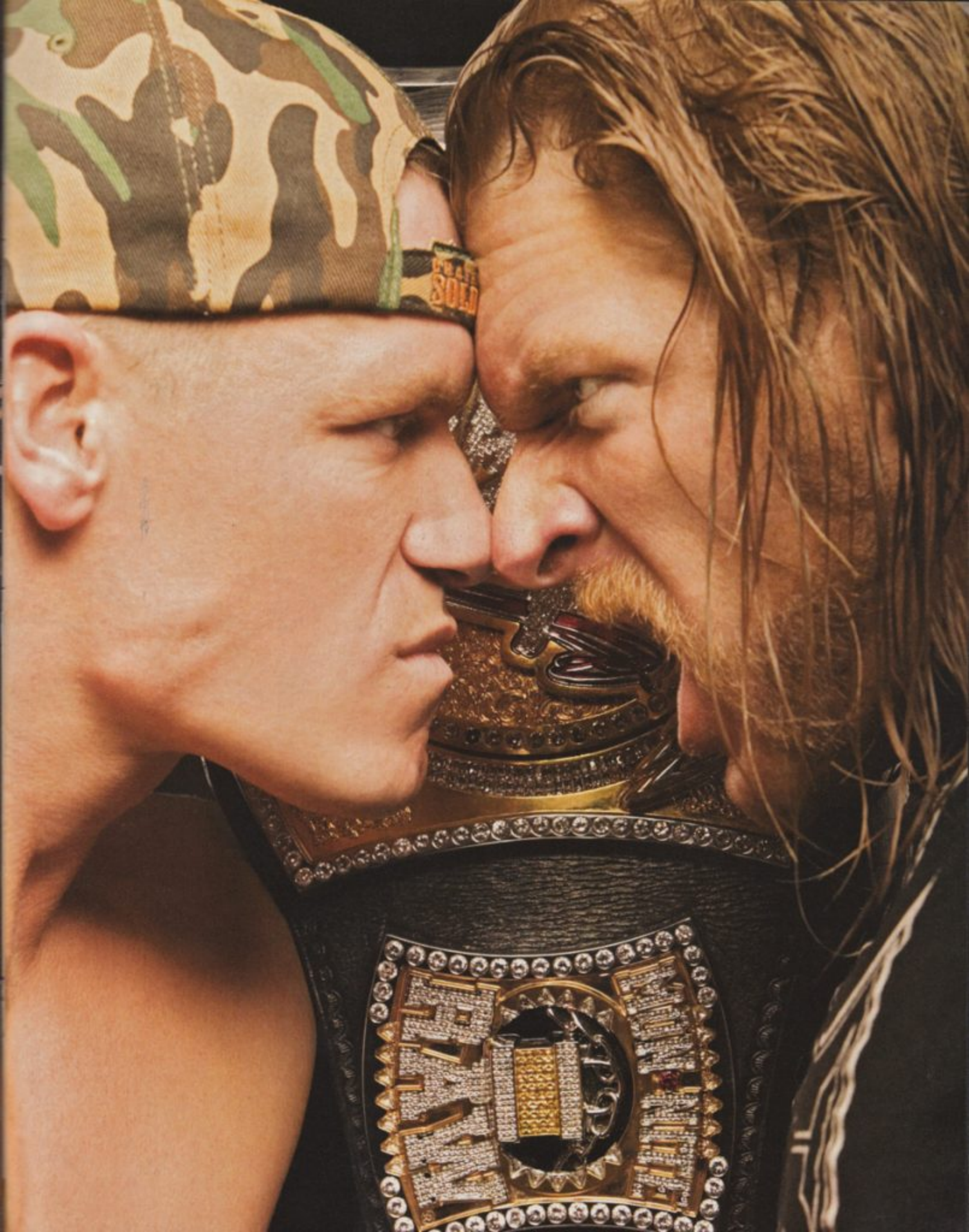
It's that kind of heart that has drawn Triple H's attention, and a begrudging admiration for Cena.

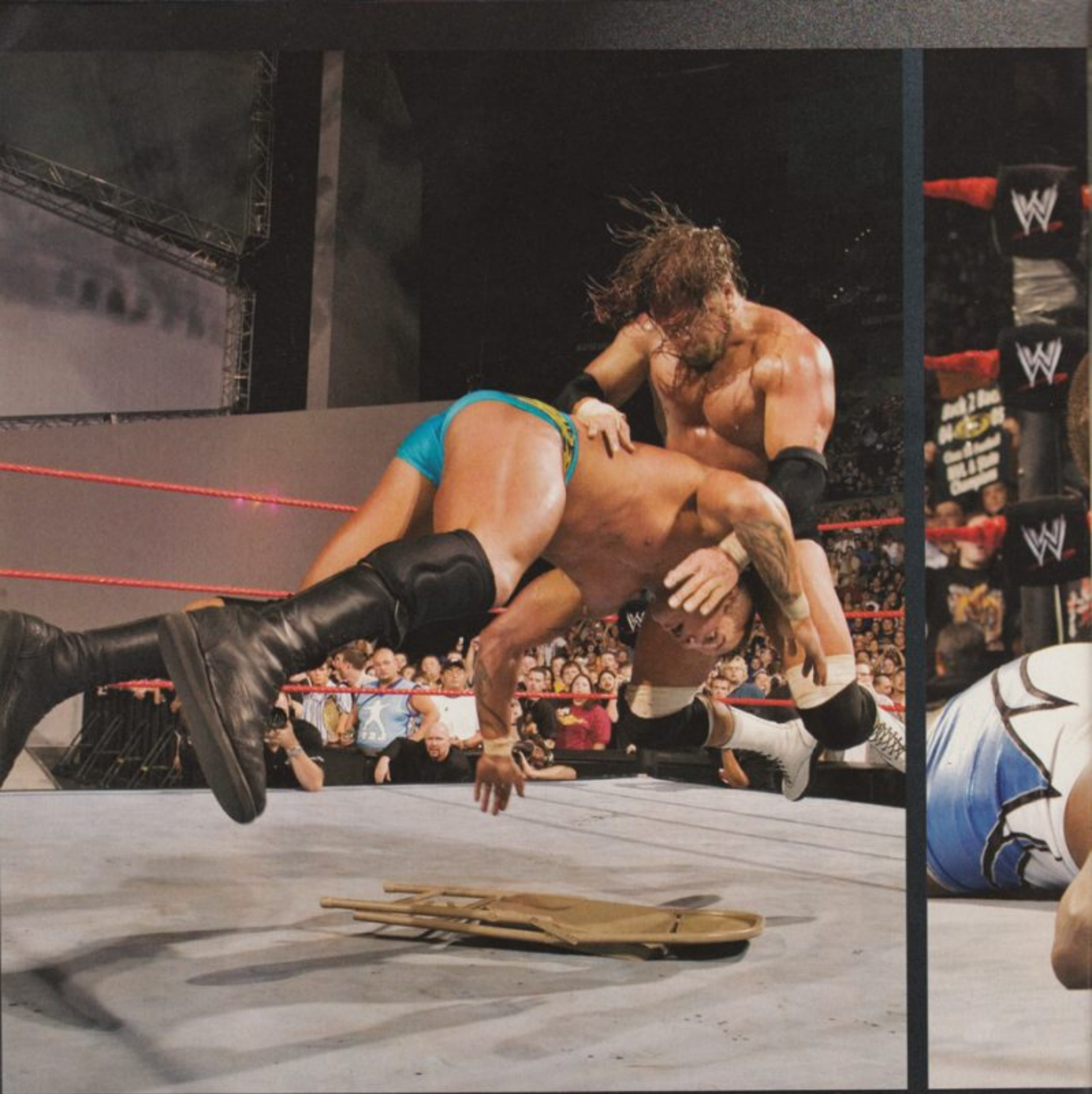
"Cena's like Rocky Balboa," Triple H says. "He may not be the prettiest fighter, but he's got more heart and determination and guts than anyone I've seen in a long time. And he better bring all of it to *WrestleMania 22*, because he's sorely going to need it."

Does this mean Cena has Triple H's respect?

"Let's not get carried away and say that I respect John Cena," he says. "I don't know John Cena; I don't care to know John Cena. I respect what he does in the ring. Beyond that, he's nothing but a goal to me."







Facing a 10-time World Champion, Cena knows his task is steep. And that's just the ways he wants it. "I like to be told that I can't do it, that it's a fight I can't win," he says wit h a laugh. "I was raised with a passion for this business and a 'never quit' attitude. And that's what I bring every day. What are you going to get when you come up against me? A hell of a fight."

Cena says that Triple H's relentless pursuit of the title is precisely what could be his undoing. "A lot of guys look past me," he says. "I fault Edge for looking past me to *WrestleMania*. He caught one hell of a beatdown for doing it.

"Triple H is a threat," he continues, "but I also see it as an opportunity. I can't predict what's going to happen, but I know that I will never back down. I'm going to go in there, guns blazing, and I'm going to give it hell."

"The Game" is fully aware of Cena's passion, for all the good he thinks it will do him. "It's going to be a

a Triple-Threat Match (in which Kane also took part). After a Chokeslam from Kane, Triple H relied on help from Batista, who pulled the Big Red Monster from the ring and allowed "The Game" to make the cover and win the World Heavyweight Championship.

September 12, 2004 – "The Game" put a quick and decisive end to Randy Orton's

reign as World Heavyweight Champion. At *Unforgiven*, Triple H schooled his former Evolution protégé, as he nailed him with a steel chair and followed it up with a Pedigree. The "Legend Killer" was defeated and Triple H became a nine-time World Champion.

January 9, 2005 – This was the win no one saw coming. With the World Heavyweight Championship vacated, six men entered the Elimination Chamber at *New Year's Revolution*, and everyone in San Juan, Puerto Rico believed they would see a new champion crowned. But they underestimated "The Game." Triple H mowed down Edge, Chris Jericho, Chris Benoit, Randy Orton and Batista, as he delivered the Pedigree to Orton and walked out with his second Elimination Chamber victory and his 10th World title.

great fight," Triple H says. "A hell of a battle. But when the smoke clears, there's only going to be one person standing, and then the world will know that I am the man."

As the clock ticks down to *WrestleMania 22*, Cena says that he'll be making sure he's fully prepared for anything Triple H might throw his way. "He's been dubbed the 'Cerebral Assassin,' and I'm going to be studying his tactics," Cena says. "You're going to see a physical contest, but you're also going to see a strategic meeting of the minds in that ring."

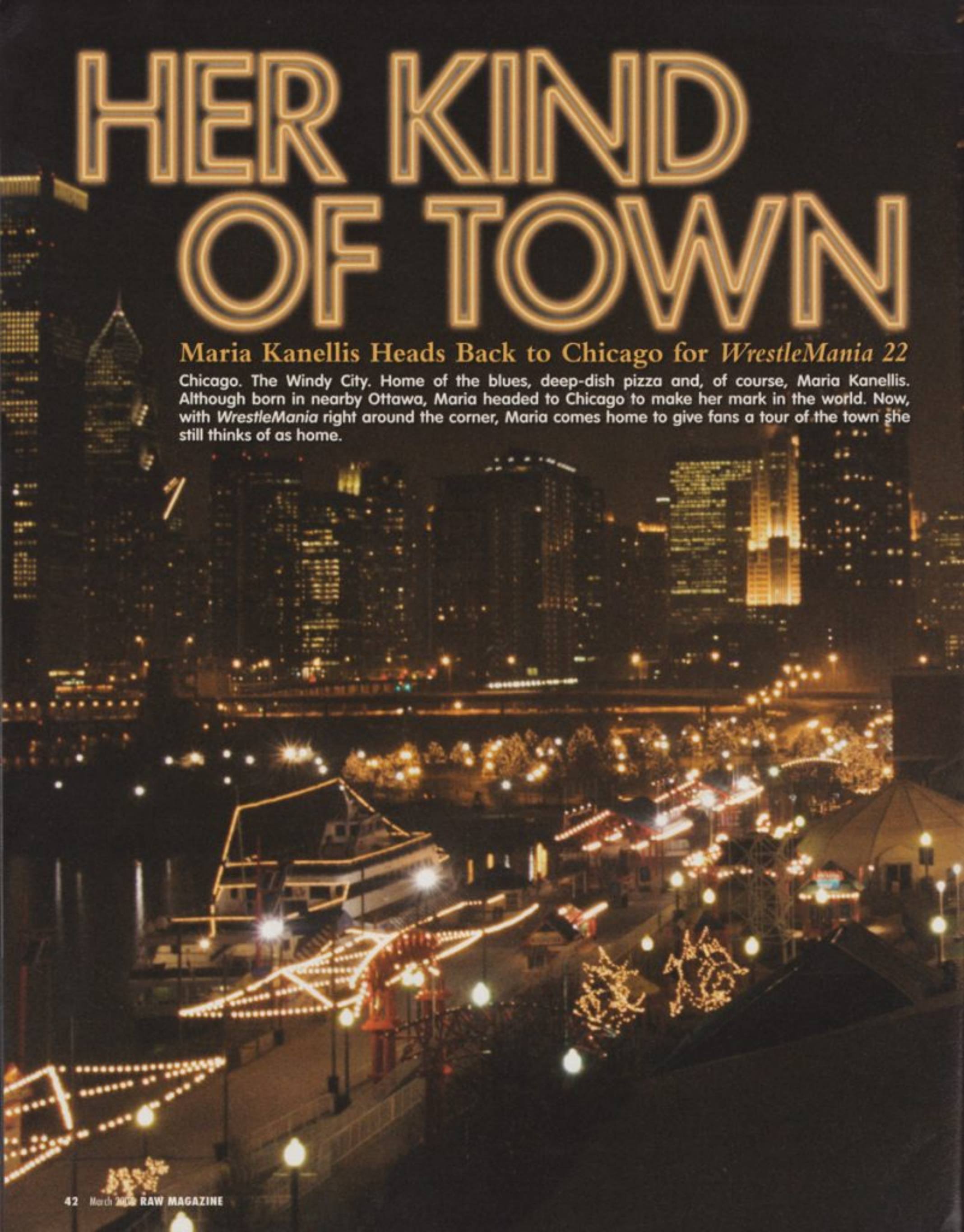
The end result?

"It's truly going to be champion vs. champion." ■

HER KIND OF TOWN

Maria Kanellis Heads Back to Chicago for *WrestleMania 22*

Chicago. The Windy City. Home of the blues, deep-dish pizza and, of course, Maria Kanellis. Although born in nearby Ottawa, Maria headed to Chicago to make her mark in the world. Now, with *WrestleMania* right around the corner, Maria comes home to give fans a tour of the town she still thinks of as home.



"The Magnificent Mile is amazing. You could spend your whole morning, afternoon and night shopping here. If you come to Chicago thinking you're going to spend an afternoon shopping, you're totally wrong. I come here whenever I'm in town."

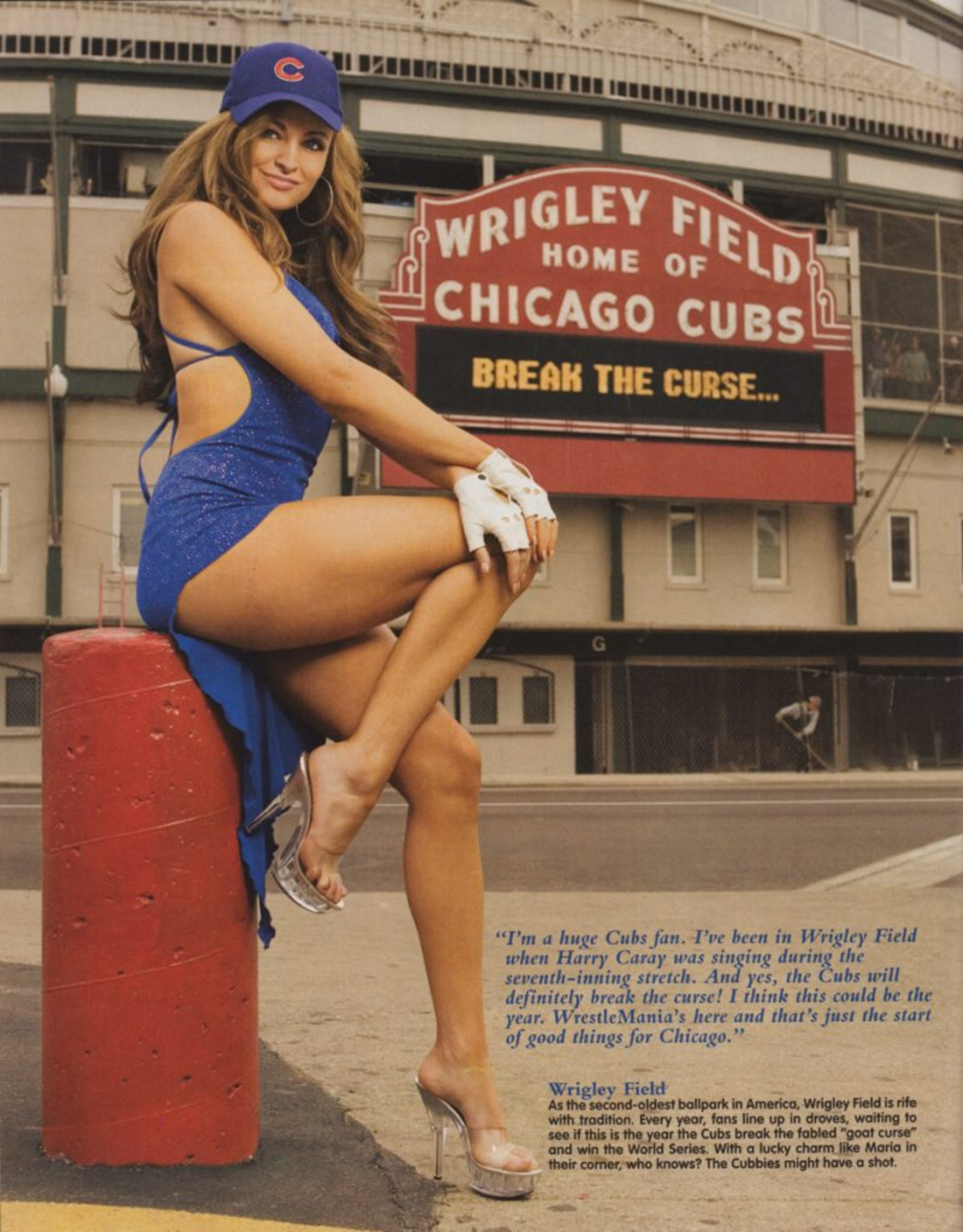
Magnificent Mile

Located in the beating heart of Chicago's downtown, the stretch of Michigan Avenue from the Chicago River to Oak Street is home to some of the Windy City's trendiest shopping spots. Ever wonder where Maria gets those ultra-hot clothes? Look no further.

"This place is a Chicago staple! If you want to experience Chicago pizza, this is the place to come. I actually had a job interview for a talent agency here. I remember thinking, 'Why would you take me to a pizza joint? I'm hoping to be a model!' Now I don't care, I eat whatever I want."

Pizzeria Uno

For more than 60 years, Uno has been the home of Chicago's traditional deep-dish pizza. With pies the size of manhole covers served in a pan that's seemingly 10 feet deep, it's the perfect place to stuff yourself silly at a pre- or post-*'Mania* party. Just be sure you leave an extra space at the table, in case Maria decides to drop in for a slice.



"I'm a huge Cubs fan. I've been in Wrigley Field when Harry Caray was singing during the seventh-inning stretch. And yes, the Cubs will definitely break the curse! I think this could be the year. WrestleMania's here and that's just the start of good things for Chicago."

Wrigley Field

As the second-oldest ballpark in America, Wrigley Field is rife with tradition. Every year, fans line up in droves, waiting to see if this is the year the Cubs break the fabled "goat curse" and win the World Series. With a lucky charm like Maria in their corner, who knows? The Cubbies might have a shot.

"Morton's is the best! It's The Rock's favorite place, so anything The Rock enjoys, I enjoy. The steak is amazing. They're there to make all of your desires come true!"

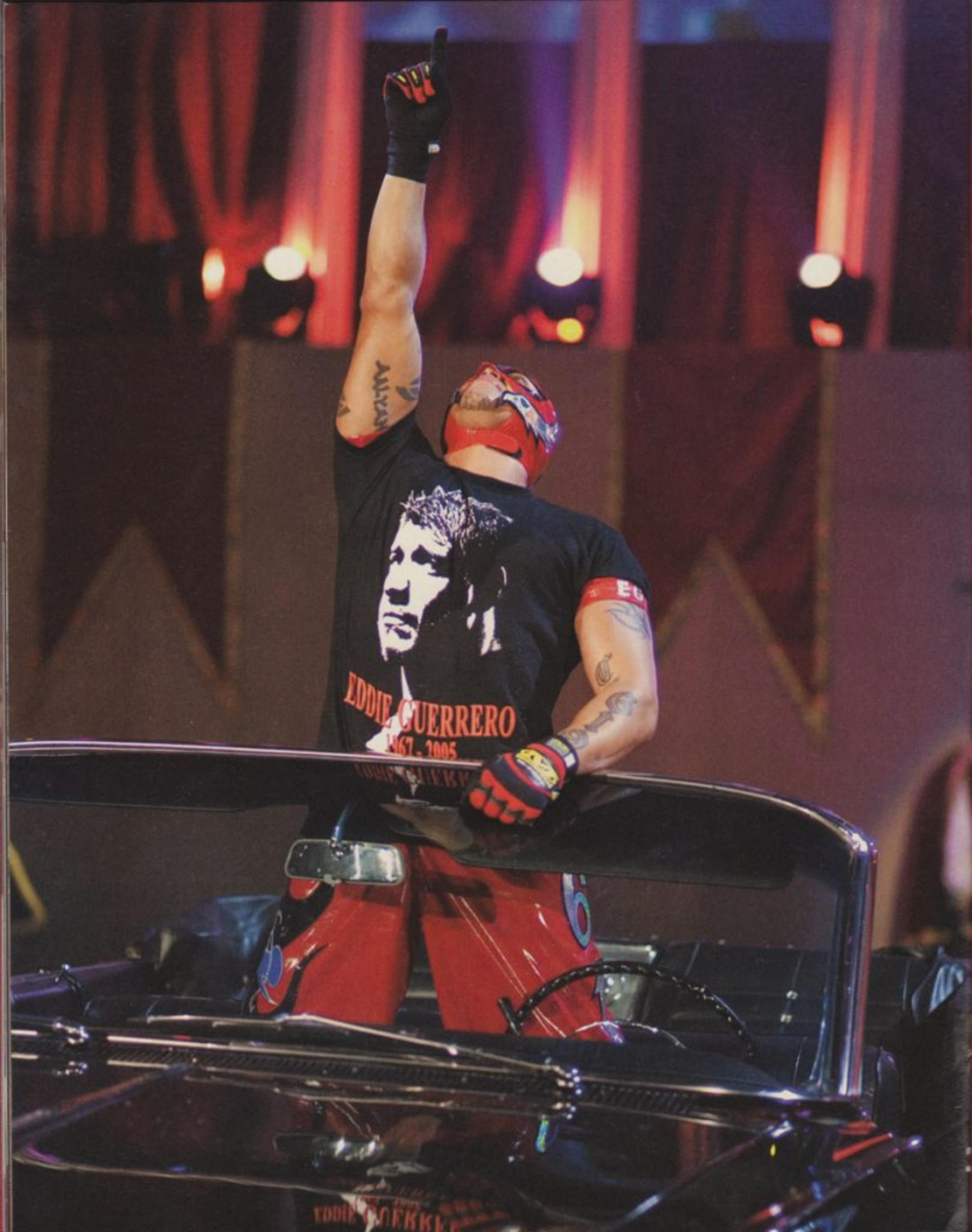
Morton's

After gorging on a deep-dish pizza, why not cap it off with a sizzling steak at Morton's? This long-standing legendary steakhouse has been one of the favorite dining spots for the WWE Superstars for years! You never know who you'll run into after *WrestleMania,* but chances are good you'll catch Maria at her favorite booth carving into a porterhouse.

"If you're coming into Chicago, you've got to hit Narcisse. They've got two of the best bartenders in the world making drinks. Just go, have a martini and enjoy the atmosphere of the place. Just make sure you dress up, 'cause they won't let you in unless you're dressed up!"

Narcisse

One of the coolest nightspots in Chicago is undoubtedly Narcisse. With its velvet-smooth ambiance, top-flight cuisine and downstairs Boudoir room (complete with bed), it's the place to be for discerning party-seekers. If you'd been there three years ago, you could have run into Maria working as the hostess just about every night. But, before you start crying over wasted time, just remember, with *WrestleMania* in town, she might just pop in to join you for a nightcap.


EDDIE GUERRERO
1967 - 2005

2006 ROYAL RUMBLE

January 29, 2006
American Airlines Arena
Miami, FL

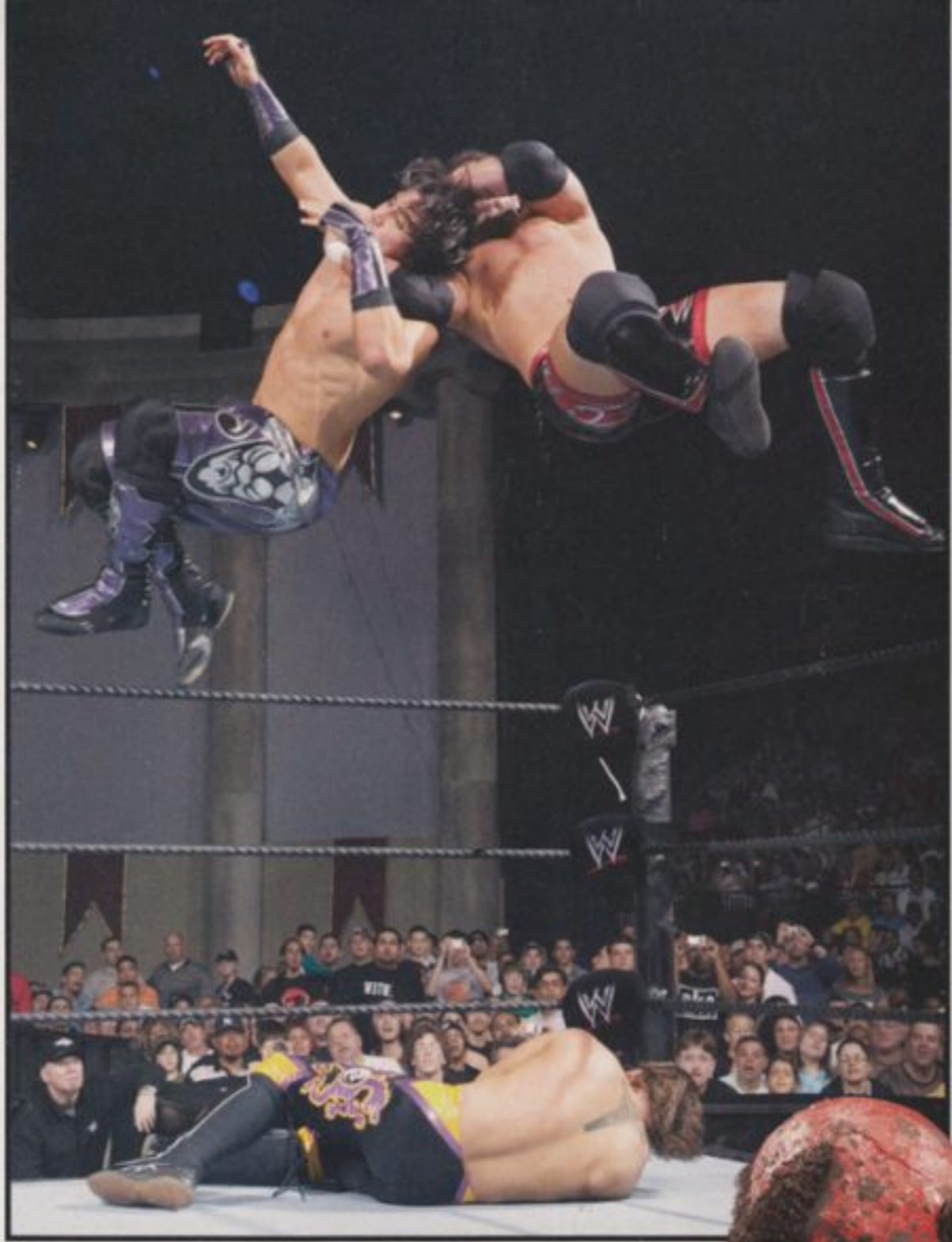
THE ULTIMATE UNDERDOG

EVERY year, 30 of the top WWE Superstars battle at the *Royal Rumble*. In its 19-year history, only two Superstars, Chris Benoit and Shawn Michaels, have won the *Rumble* having entered at No. 1. Prior to this year's event, Vince McMahon was the only man to win having entered second.

The task to endure over 60 minutes against 29 other Superstars is an epic one. To survive the *Rumble*, one must summon endurance, intelligence and heart. Rey Mysterio may be the epitome of all these things.

RESULTS

1. Gregory Helms def. Kid Kash, Nunzio, Funaki, Jamie Noble and Paul London to win the Cruiserweight Championship after a Shining Wizard on Funaki
2. Mickie James def. Ashley following a powerbomb
3. Boogeyman def. JBL after a pump-handle slam
4. Kurt Angle retained the World Heavyweight Championship, defeating Mark Henry with a roll-up
5. John Cena regained the WWE Championship, forcing Edge to tap out to an STFU
6. Rey Mysterio won the Royal Rumble, last eliminating Randy Orton



The match gained momentum quickly, as each of the competitors used signature maneuvers with force and precision. The highlight of the match came when London launched himself to the outside of the ring via London Calling (Shooting Star Press). He took out four men and brought the sold-out crowd to their feet. However, a surge by Helms proved decisive. Helms creamed Funaki with a Shining Wizard to capture the Cruiserweight Championship.

While the high-flyers of WWE dazzled in the air, the Boogeyman planned a different kind of spectacle. In his first match on pay-per-view, many were curious as to how the bizarre Boogeyman would perform.

His opponent, JBL, showed his true colors early on as he threw Jillian Hall in the path of the Boogeyman. After he took Jillian down to the canvas, he allowed worms to slide from his mouth into hers. JBL used this to gain the advantage, but even the self-proclaimed "Wrestling God" could not stop the psychological warfare of the Boogeyman, who scored the pinfall after a pump-handle slam.

Mysterio has never backed down against immense obstacles. The 2006 *Royal Rumble* would be no different. He was the smallest of the 30 competitors. He was the second entrant, which meant he would have to battle more than 60 minutes to survive. And if the odds weren't stacked against him enough, he began the *Rumble* by facing off with 10-time former World Champion Triple H.

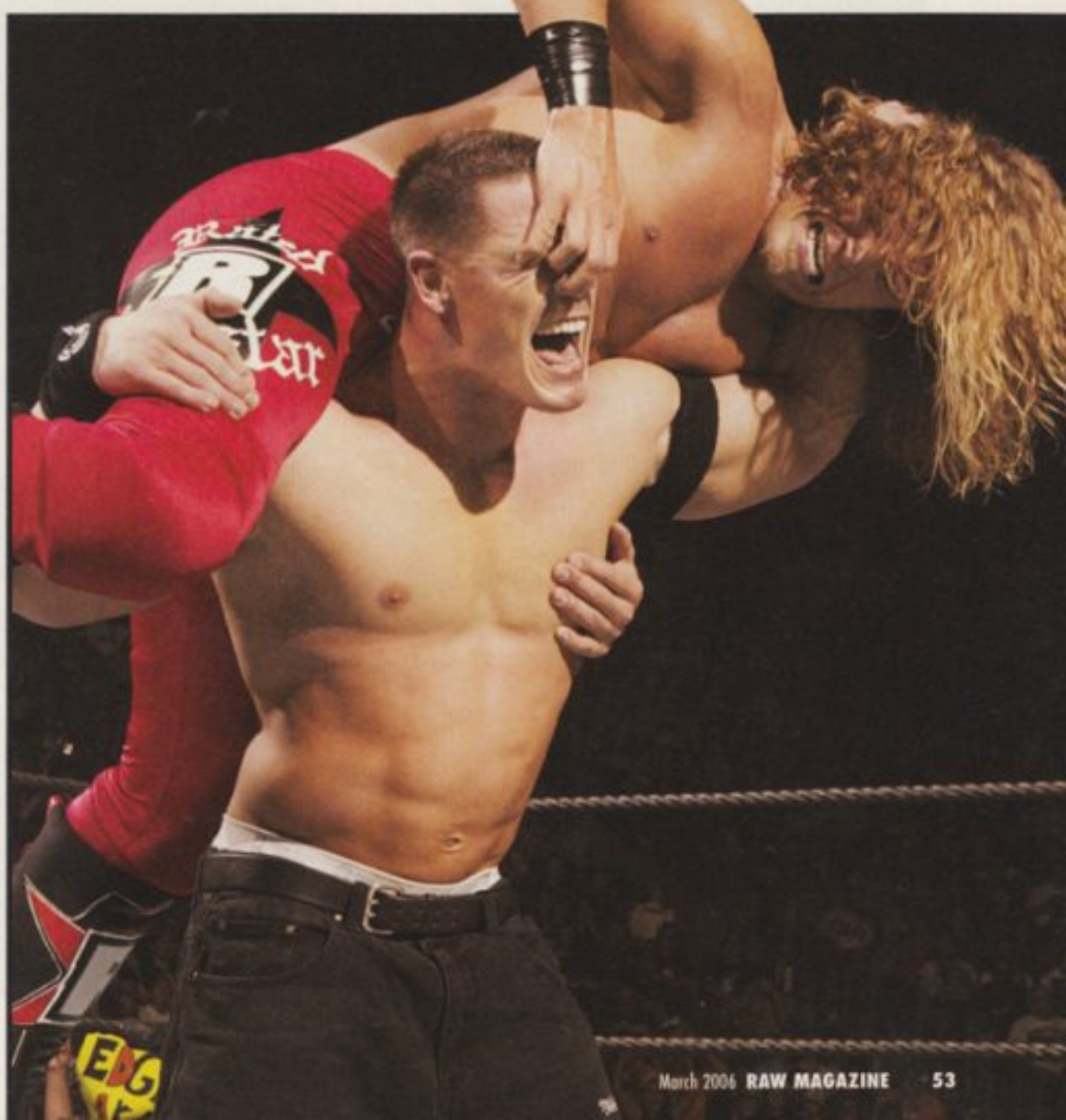
But before that, the Cruiserweight division of *SmackDown* got their time in the spotlight, featuring many athletes no doubt inspired by the acrobatic style of Mysterio. It was fitting that on this night, the Cruiserweight division nearly stole the show in a fast-paced spectacle.

The Cruiserweight Invitational match featured five of the top competitors from *SmackDown*: Jamie Noble, Paul London, Funaki, Nunzio and reigning champion Kid Kash. Gregory Helms was *Raw's* only participant.

As guest referee in Mickie James' showdown against Ashley, Trish Stratus went into the *Rumble* with a difficult task. It was not made any easier when Mickie declared her love for Trish in a pre-match interview. Though visibly perturbed by this, Trish vowed to do her job as referee with objectivity.

The match proved fast-paced and aggressive, as neither Diva gave an inch. Both dug deep into their arsenals to try to outsmart the other, until Mickie grabbed Ashley's shorts and used them to viciously powerbomb her into the mat. Stratus reluctantly counted to three in yet another chapter in this increasingly odd story of girl meets girl.

John Cena entered the *Royal Rumble* with anything but love on his mind. He was on a mission to reclaim the WWE Championship which Edge took from him at *New Year's Revolution*. Edge proclaimed that he would not be a transitional champion. The battle was fierce, and Edge quickly gained an advantage after using Lita to distract Cena. Despite Lita's interference, Cena eventually gained the upper hand and nailed an FU. But that wasn't enough



for Cena. In the center of the ring, John Cena locked Edge in the STFU and made him tap out. Cena's one misstep was exorcised, as the demon of the "Rated R Superstar" was cast away.

Kurt Angle needed everything he could to survive his own demon in the form of Mark Henry. The strongman's size was enough to throw Angle off his usual game plan and slow him down.

It took two mighty steal chair shots and a dirty low blow from Angle to bring the behemoth down. Angle then ripped off the turnbuckle pad from the corner of the middle rope. Henry charged at Angle but Kurt reacted with a drop toe hold that sent his opponent face first into the exposed turnbuckle. The "American Hero" then rolled him up and scored the pin. But before Angle could celebrate, the lights dimmed ominously. Gongs then rang out to signal the arrival of Undertaker. He raised his hand in the air and lightning poured down from the heavens, which rocked the ring and shattered Angle's confidence.

The 2006 *Royal Rumble* match began with two of the brightest stars in WWE history. In one corner stood Triple H, one of the most hated men to ever compete in WWE. In the other, a true fan favorite, Rey Mysterio.

This year's event was one filled with many surprises, among them the returns of Eugene, Goldust and Tatanka. While it was no surprise that Rob Van Dam would return at the *Rumble*, it was extraordinary that he returned in prime form. Entering at No. 20, RVD tore through the competition with one amazing move after another.

Another surprise was the method Mr. McMahon employed to keep Shawn Michaels out of the winner's circle.

Not only was an "arrangement" between Melina and Mr. McMahon made to have MNM concentrate their attack on the "Heartbreak Kid," but when those efforts failed, McMahon personally stepped in and distracted Michaels. His son, Shane, snuck behind HBK and tossed him over the top rope and to the arena floor to eliminate him. After this madness, RVD scored a superkick on Carlito, which sent him over the top rope.

Four men remained.

RVD, Triple H, Randy Orton and Rey Mysterio each settled back into a corner to size up the other survivors and compose their mind and bodies for this chance at greatness.

Mysterio and Triple H had been in the ring for almost one hour and had narrowly avoided elimination on several occasions.

Triple H launched a charging Mysterio at Van Dam, knocking RVD from the top rope to the outside. It was now two on one. After a 619, Rey locked Triple H in a body scissors and sent him to the outside, eliminating "The Game."

An opportunistic Orton then picked Mysterio up to hurl him over the top, but Mysterio, as he has done so many times, locked his legs around the neck of Orton and snapped him to the floor with perhaps the most important hurricanrana of his career.

On this night, even the combined efforts of a 10-time World Champion and the youngest World Champion in WWE history couldn't eliminate the masked aerialist. Mysterio was just too fast for them, as he used all the quickness and agility and technique he'd mastered in his legendary 16-year career. The ultimate underdog had done it again. ■

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C NEW! WrestleMania 22 Baseball Jersey
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Sales Tax (see chart at left)	$
TOTAL	$

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ANTONINO ROCCA VS. ROB VAN DAM

Vincent J. McMahon once said that next to Milton Berle, Antonino Rocca sold more television sets than any other individual. Often wrestling as Argentina Rocca, he was a phenom during his heyday in the 1950s and early '60s, awing audiences with his unorthodox tactics and high-flying arsenal. It is often said that he was the first true high-flyer and led the way for the stars of future generations. Rob Van Dam represents today's elite in terms of energy and explosiveness in the ring. He continually defies odds, trends and gravity in his quest to win. Is RVD the evolutionary master of the style pioneered by Rocca? What would happen if the man who brought wrestling to the forefront of TV ever met up with "Mr. Monday Night"?

ANTONINO ROCCA

STRENGTHS

- **Agility and Grace:** In his time, Rocca was the most agile and dexterous wrestler alive.
- **Hero of the People:** A hero to immigrants of Italian and Latino heritage, the arena was often filled with people who supported Rocca unconditionally.
- **Fancy Feet:** Some of the quickest kicks in the history of sports-entertainment. He was known to toy with his fallen opponent, using his feet to slap at them.

WEAKNESSES

- **Mat skill:** Known for his flamboyant style, Rocca's pure technical skill can be tested.

KEY WINS

- **May 13, 1957:** Teamed with Miguel Perez to defeat Dick the Bruiser & Karl Von Hess in a two-out-of-three falls match.
- **March 17, 1958:** Teamed with Perez to defeat Hans Schmidt and Jerry Graham in a two-out-of-three falls match.
- **July 1959:** Defeated "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers to win the WWE World International Championship.

KEY LOSSES

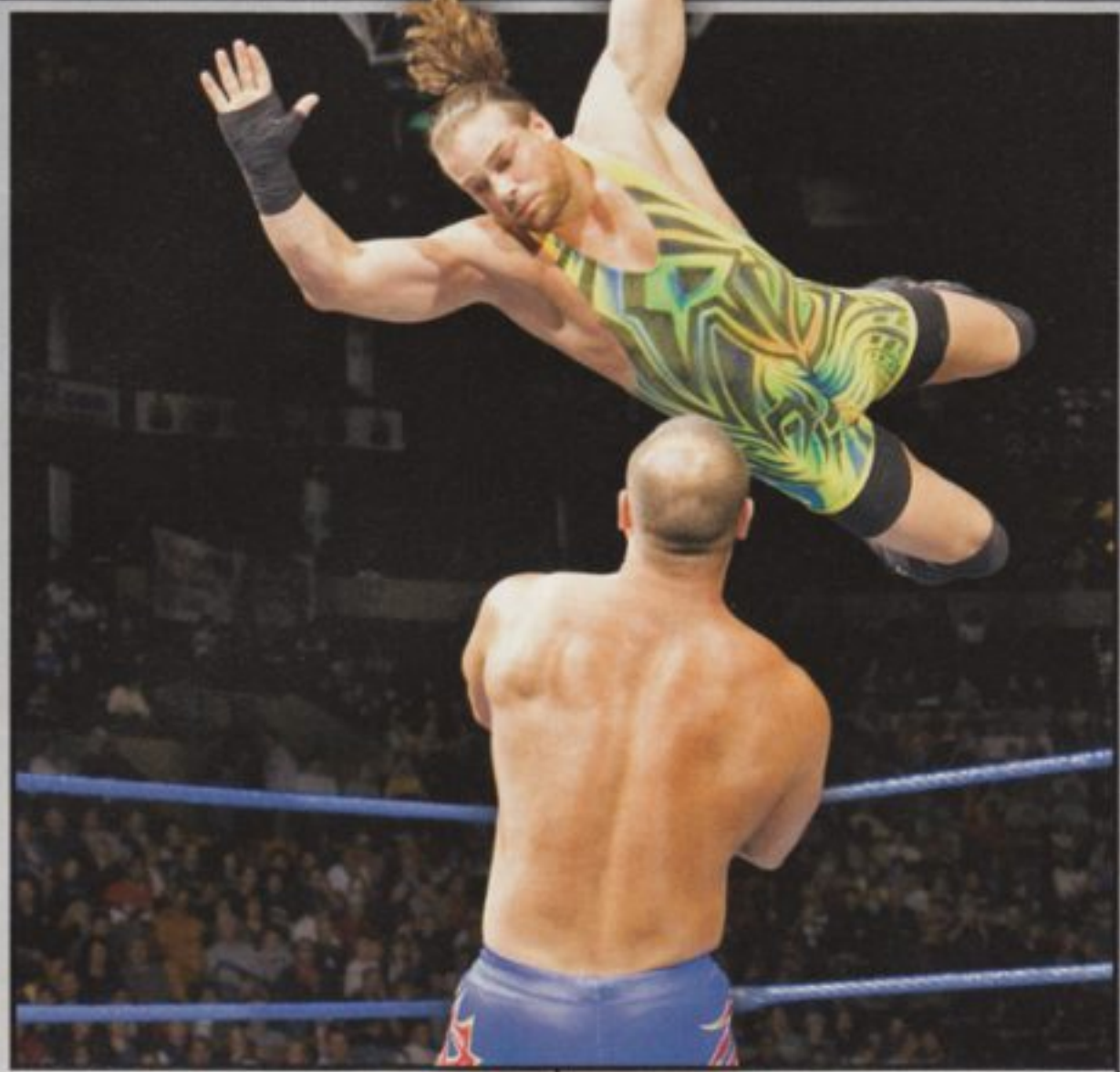
- **October 27, 1961:** Lost to Freddie Blassie in a two-out-of-three falls match in Los Angeles.
- **April 29, 1963:** Lost to "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers to crown the first WWE Champion in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

TRADEMARK MANEUVERS

- **Airplane Spin**
- **Argentine Backbreaker (Torture Rack)**
- **Flying Head Scissors**
- **Quick Foot Slaps**

STRATEGY

- **Keep it in the Ring:** Rocca's



matches were rarely filled with tables, ladders, chairs or ringside brawls. Van Dam is lethal when it comes to using these objects to his advantage.

- **Popularity Contest:** Though RVD is a focused competitor, he does bask in the attention of the fans, sometimes to his downfall. Another wildly popular veteran like Rocca may steal some of the accolades and use this to throw RVD off his game.

ROB VAN DAM

STRENGTHS

- **Extreme Experience:** RVD has survived some of the most extreme matches and competitors ever seen.
- **Found a Balance:** Van Dam possesses a great deal of strength, agility and speed. Though his true home may be in the air, he can mat wrestle or use his martial arts, if necessary.
- **Comeback Kid:** RVD should never be counted out. His explosions of offense in times of seemingly certain defeat have taken out some of the best.

WEAKNESSES

- **Showman or Showboat?:** Van Dam enjoys the fans' support. He sometimes will fail to capitalize on an opportunity because of his need for positive reinforcement from the crowd.

KEY WINS

- **April 4, 1998:** Defeated Bam Bam Bigelow to win the ECW Television Championship in Buffalo, NY. He would go on to hold that title for 23 months.
- **March 17, 2002:** Defeated William Regal to win the Intercontinental Championship at *WrestleMania X8*, held at Toronto's SkyDome.
- **May 27, 2002:** Defeated Eddie Guerrero in a Ladder Match on *Raw*.

KEY LOSSES

- **April 21, 2002:** Lost to Eddie Guerrero at *Backlash* to claim the Intercontinental Championship.
- **September 22, 2002:** Lost to Triple H in a World Heavyweight Championship Match at *Unforgiven*.
- **June 30, 2003:** Lost to Triple H in a World Heavyweight Championship Match on *Raw*.

TRADEMARK MANEUVERS

- **Five-Star Frog Splash**
- **Van Daminator**
- **Van Terminator**
- **Split-Legged Moonsault**

STRATEGY

- **Size Matters:** In this contest, RVD would have the size and strength advantage. He may want to weaken Rocca to start using his tremendous martial-arts kicks.
- **Take it to the Extreme:** Not many competitors can survive a Van Daminator or Van Terminator.
- **For the Birds:** RVD has done very well in his career against men who compete in a similar style. In ECW, Sabu and Jerry Lynn both wrestled in this high-risk style, and both of them only pushed Van Dan to fly higher. The same is true in WWE, where he had success against fellow daredevil Jeff Hardy.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The battle between these two dynamic and electrifying Superstars would surely be one in which anything could happen. Would Rocca use his creativity to throw a new wrinkle into his famous bag of tricks? Would he be able to hang with the revolutionary Van Dam? How would RVD react to a foot slap to the face? With these two mercurial gladiators facing off, the possibilities are limitless. The true winner of this contest would be all those who are fans of high-flying, high risk and acrobatic wrestling. ■

COACH'S CORNER

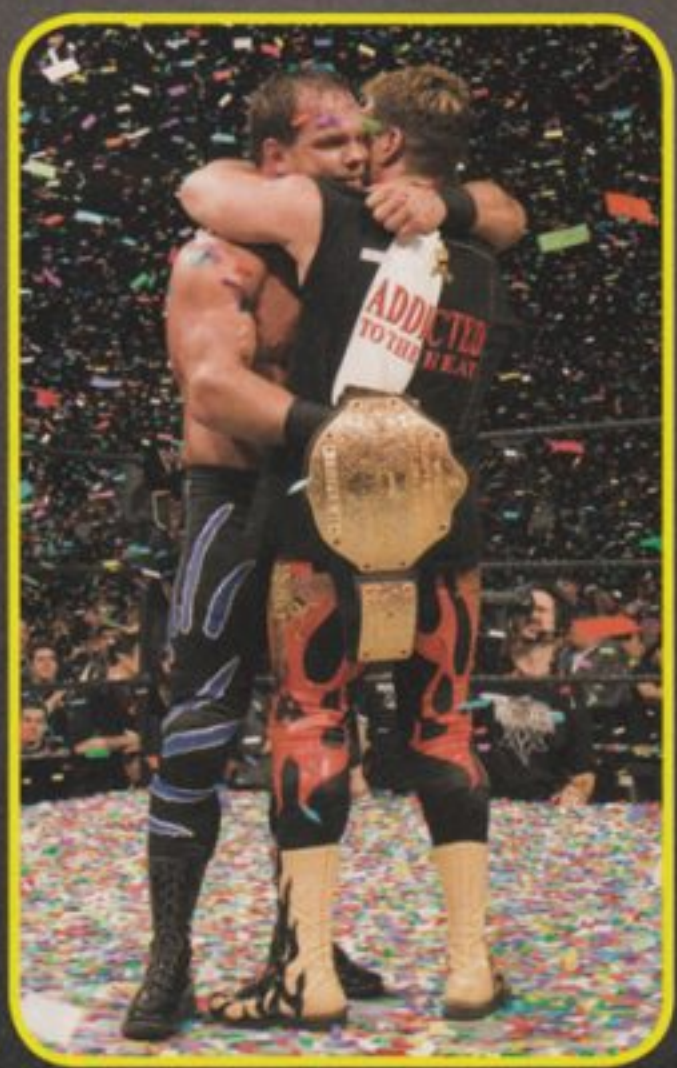
"I have become a star because of WWE, and others are just starting to take notice."

— Jonathan Coachman

THE PRIDES OF MARCH

They call it "March Madness" for a reason. The anticipation usually outweighs the actual games. The spectacle outshines the nuts and bolts of the competition at hand. Sure, we watch to see the underdogs win. We watch to see individual performances that may never be accomplished again, no matter how hard that athlete tries.

But, you see, that is their March Madness, not ours. By now most of you know that "The Coach" has branched out and is now the main play-by-play voice for College Sports Television (CSTV). I do everything from football to amateur wrestling to basketball around the country. I am a sports junkie. And you can't blame CSTV for latching onto "The Coach" train that is running full-steam ahead.



So many have asked the question, Which do you enjoy more? I have the same answer for everyone—I know where my bread is buttered. I have become a star because of WWE, and others are just starting to take notice. You would think, however, that this would be the one month where sports-entertainment would take a back seat to those that play for the love of the game.

You would be wrong. You see, the WWE has reinvented "March Madness." For three weeks in March, you can look forward to the biggest night in sports-entertainment: *WrestleMania*. People talk about it all over the world. Every year, people from all over the globe come to witness this spectacular one-night event.

College basketball cannot say the same. Believe me, I am not taking anything away from the greatest tournament in sports. But when it comes down to one night, one time, one moment, it doesn't get any bigger or better than *WrestleMania*.

If you sit back and think about it, stars are made there. It's not necessarily make or break for anyone at *WrestleMania*, because if you are featured there, then on some level you have already made it. It becomes easy to discount how difficult it is to not only get to this level, but to also actually perform in front of the biggest viewing crowd just short of the Super Bowl.

If you make it far in the NCAA Tournament, you get to go home to a wonderful celebration and a nice pat on the back. Here, there is no pat on the back. No "attaboys." Because there is always the next night and the next night.

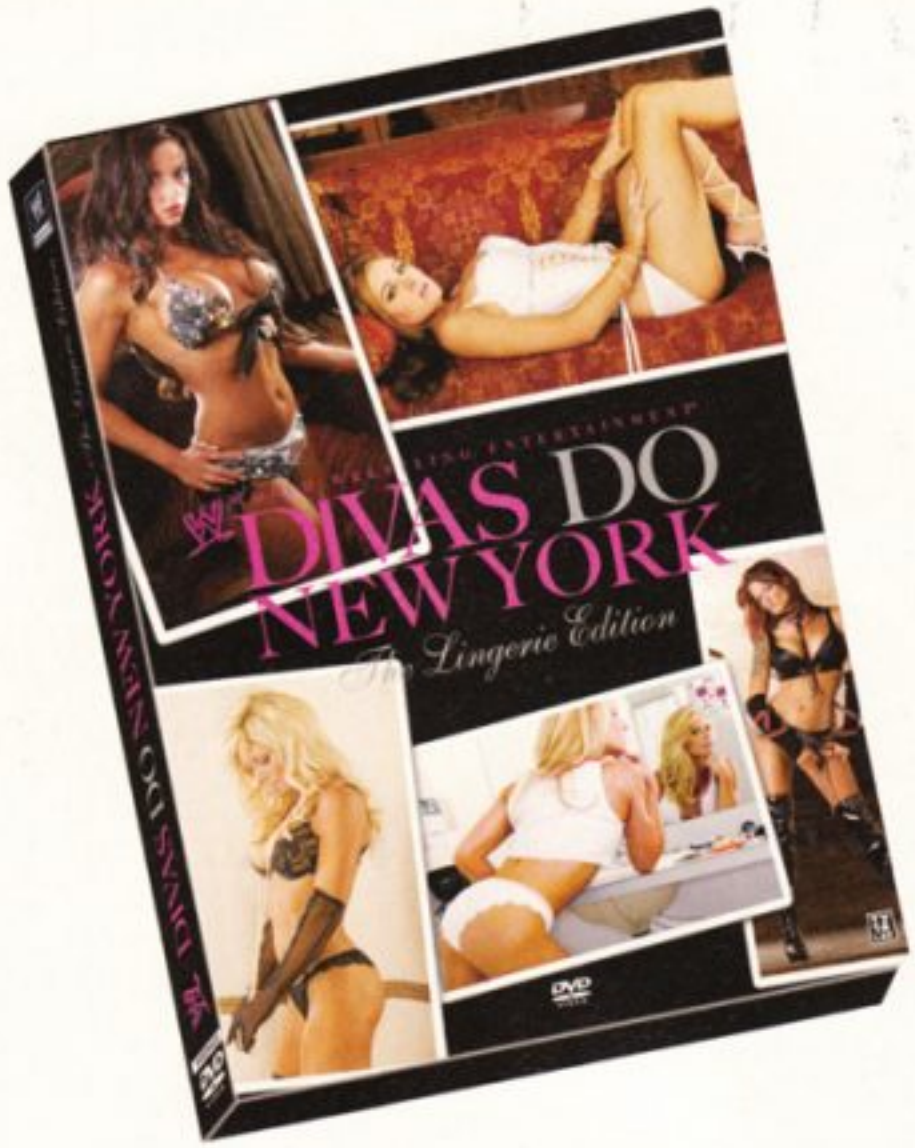
WrestleMania is as special as it gets. We all understand, however, that it is because of the other 51 weeks of the year that this one night becomes so monumental. Who can forget Shawn Michaels coming down from the rafters? Or The Rock and Hulk Hogan holding nearly 70,000 fans in the palms of their hands? Or the image of Chris Benoit winning the World Heavyweight Championship and being embraced by his best friend, the late, great Eddie Guerrero, in the middle of Madison Square Garden?

It's easy to forget where you were when magic happens. But we make it impossible to forget where we were.

Images and moments are what we do. Fantasy becomes reality. And isn't it nice that for one special night, there is no bigger fantasy than the event we call *WrestleMania*?

Halle. Call me. ■

I



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DVD available February 21.

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THE DVD SHELF

JARHEAD

Sam Mendes' blistering film about the first Gulf War can at last be brought home on DVD in two fully loaded editions.

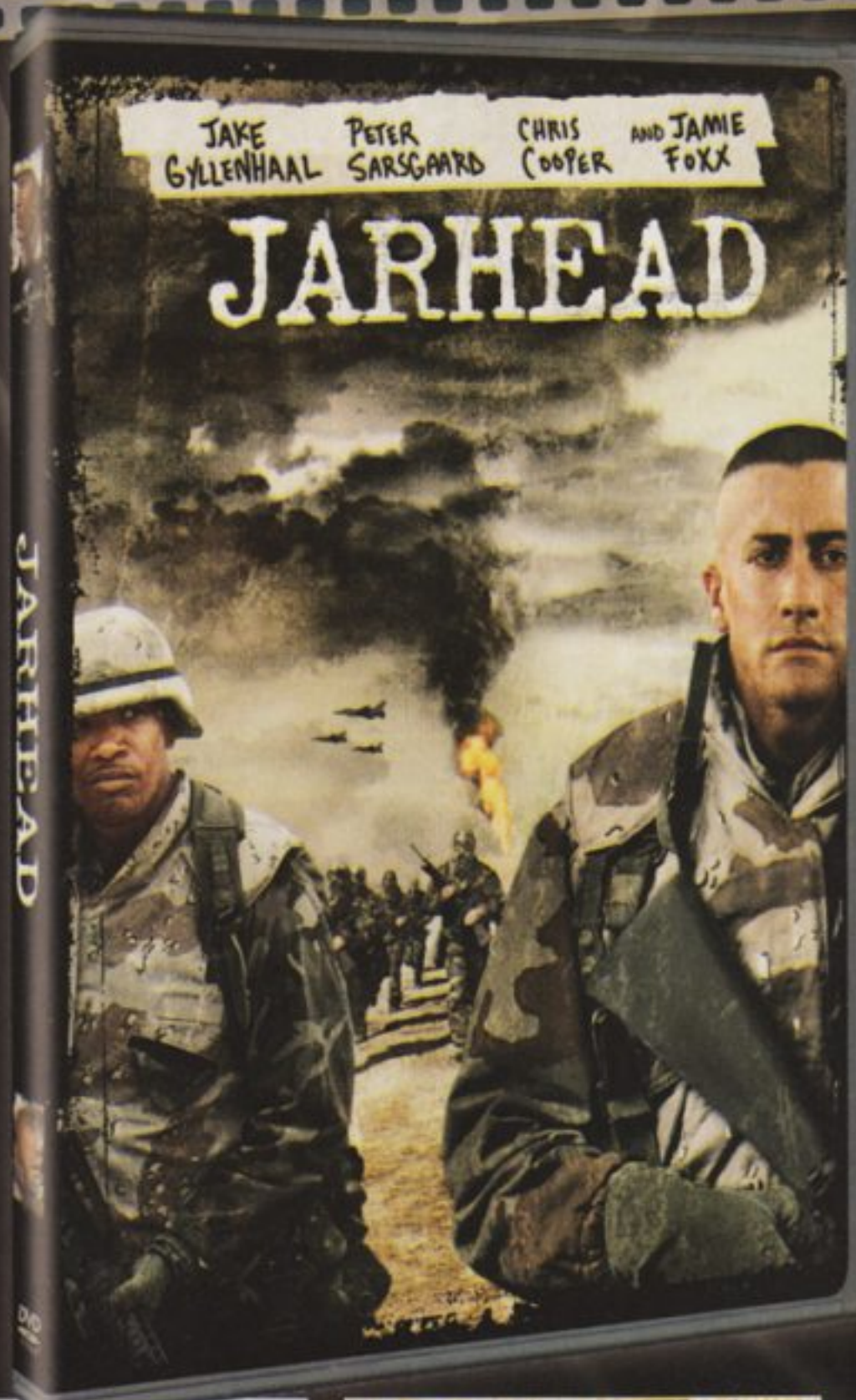
Both sets offer the film in 2.35:1 anamorphic widescreen format, and feature audio commentaries from director Sam Mendes as well as screenwriter William Broyles, Jr. and Anthony Swofford, whose real-life Gulf War experiences inspired the book and movie. Also included are a number of deleted scenes and interviews.

For the serious *Jarhead* fan, though, the two-disc Collector's Edition is the way to go. Boasting all the extras of the single-disc set, it offers a slew of special features. Included is a series of on-set video diaries filmed by the cast using hand-held cameras, giving an unprecedented look behind the scenes.

The DVD also features a bracing look at the real-life experiences of the U.S. Marine Corps. *Semper Fi: Life After the Corps* tells the story of former Marines and their integration back into civilian life while *Background* talks to actual Marines who worked as extras on *Jarhead*, with their thoughts on Hollywood combat vs. the real deal.

Jarhead is a bracing, hard-hitting and very timely look at the fog of war and has all the makings of a modern classic. With an extras-packed edition, crystal clear sound and razor-sharp picture, the only fitting thing to say is "Ooh-rah!"

— Jeremy Brown



RAW RATING: ★★★★★

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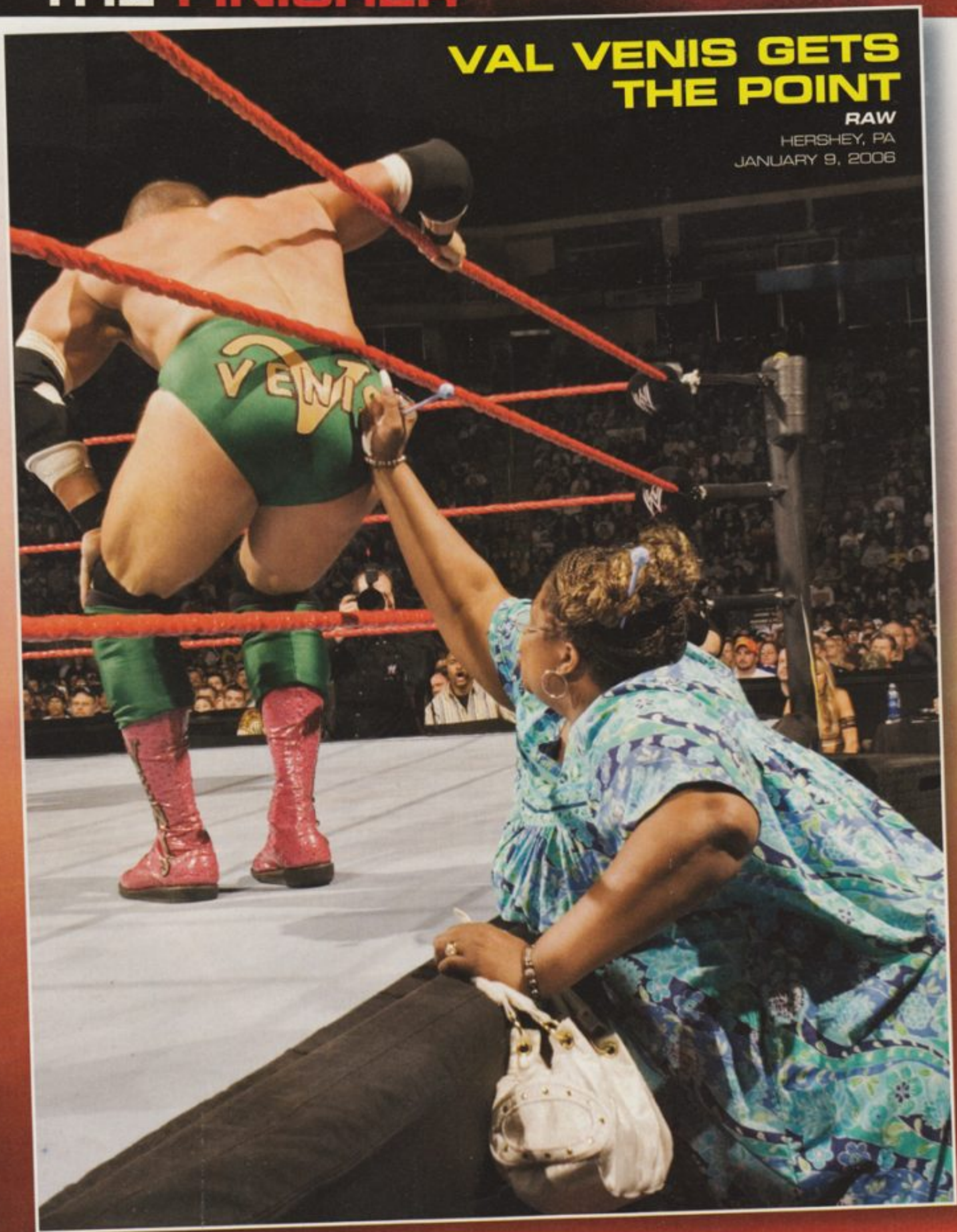

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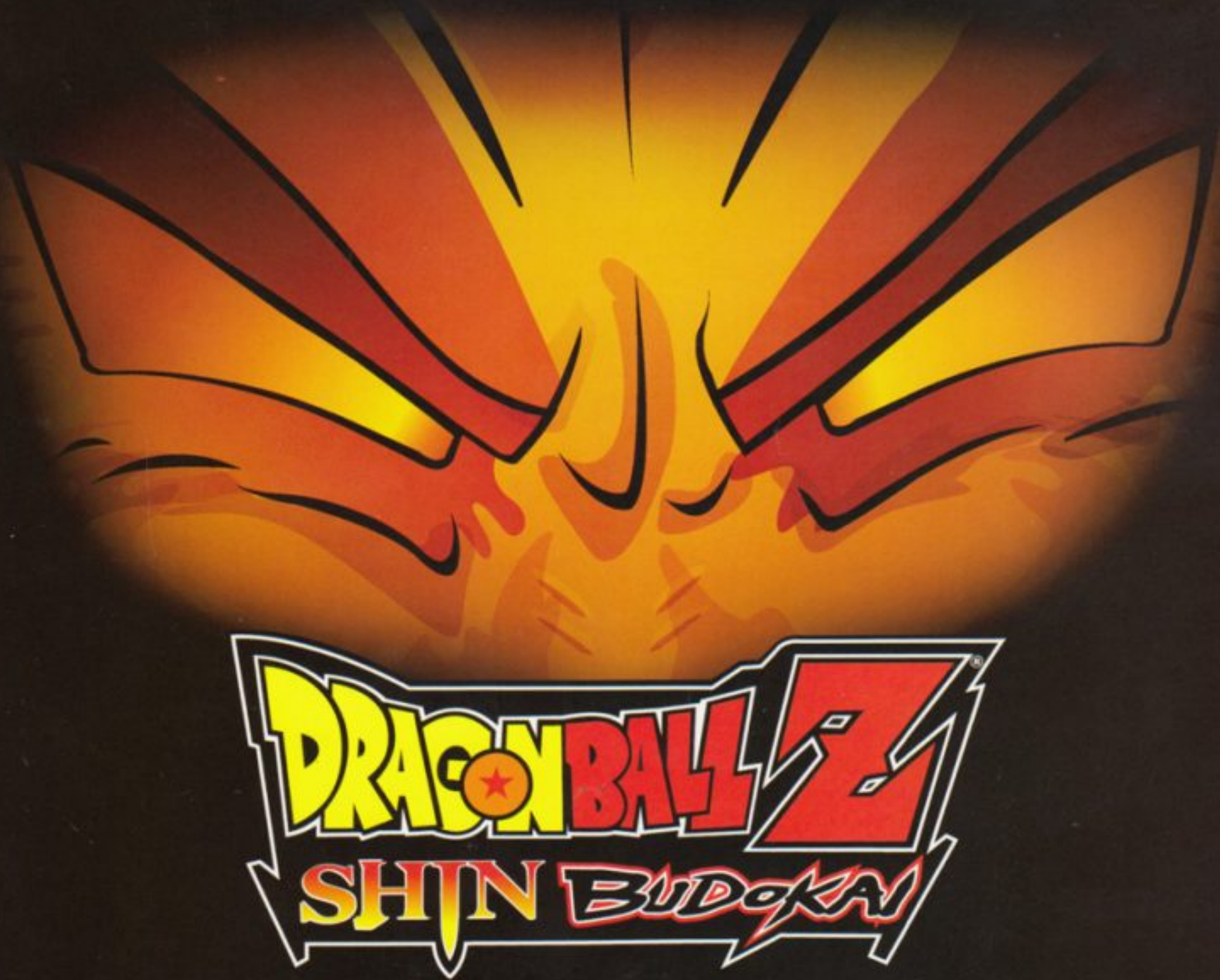

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